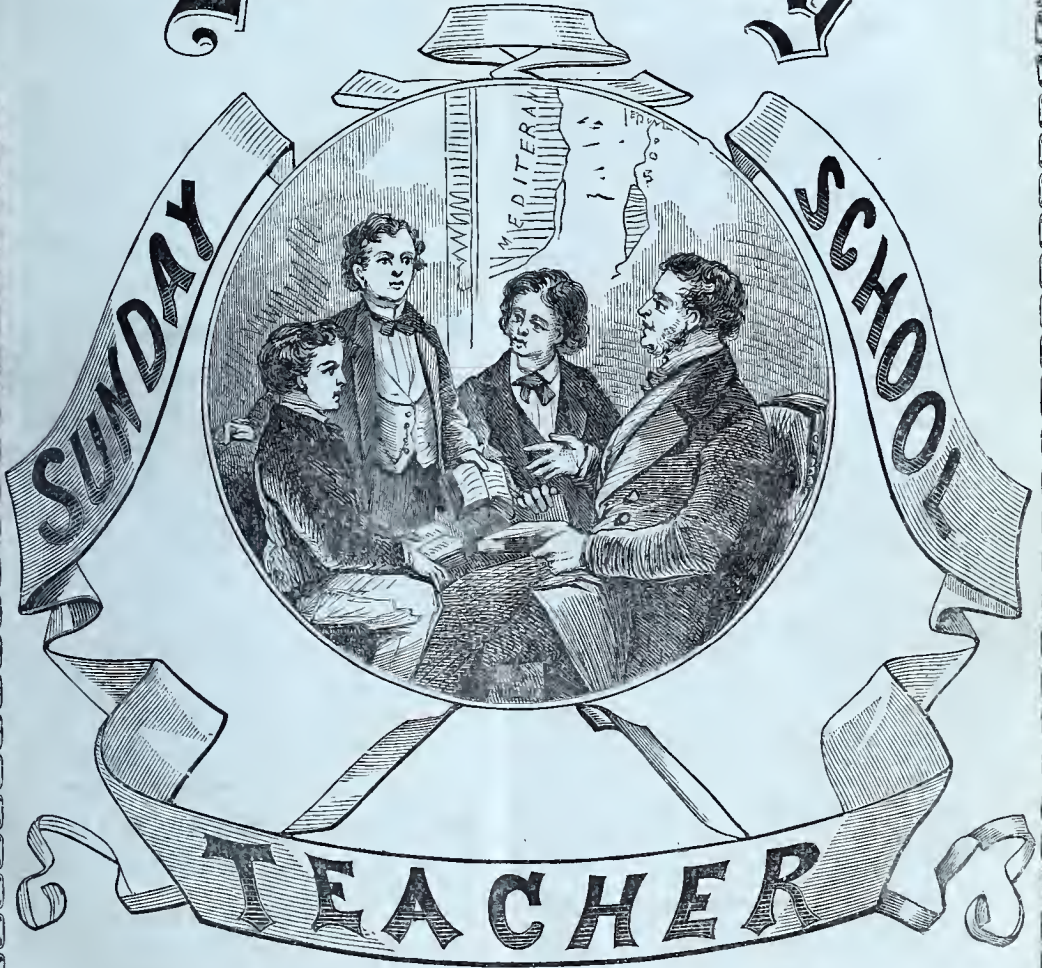


JULY, 1878.

The Augsburg



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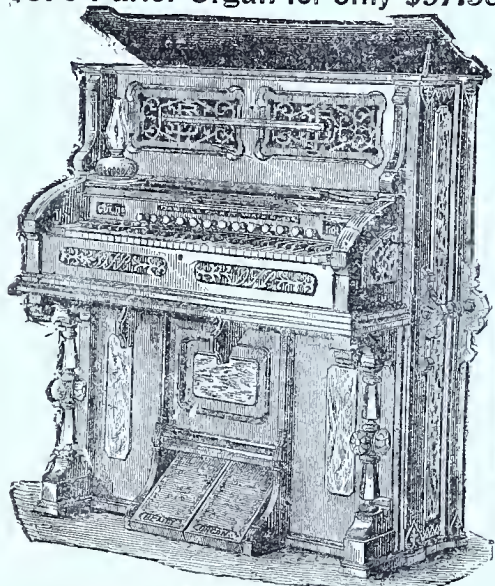
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THE AUGSBURG SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHER.

VOL. IV.

PHILADELPHIA, JULY, 1878.

No. 7.

REV. F. W. CONRAD, D.D., EDITOR.

PROF. H. L. BAUGHER, MANAGING EDITOR.

LUTHERAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL AT SAVANNAH, GA.

ITS SEMI-CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY.

The Sunday-school of the English Lutheran church, Savannah, Ga., Rev. J. B. Riemensnyder, pastor, celebrated its fiftieth anniversary during Easter week. The exercises were appropriate, and some of the reminiscences awakened of more than ordinary significance.

The Savannah *Daily News* of April 22d contained the subjoined letter, addressed by Rev. A. D. Cohen to Mr. J. T. Thomas, the superintendent of the school, giving an account of the manner in which he and Rev. L. M. Cohen, his brother, two Jewish boys, were induced to attend the Lutheran Sabbath-school at Savannah, Ga., on the 14th of June, 1835, by one of its teachers, Miss Eliza M. Herb, who died in 1871, after forty-three years of faithful service, both of whom became disciples of Jesus of Nazareth and preachers of the unsearchable riches of Christ. It presents a very remarkable incident, and will be read with special interest:

WINDSOR, N. C., April 16, 1878.
J. T. Thomas, Esq., Savannah, Ga.:

DEAR SIR: After an absence of several weeks, I returned home yesterday, too late to reply to your letter by return of mail, but proceed now to thank you and your Sunday-school co-workers for the kind and flattering invitation to be present and share in the festivities of the "Fiftieth Anniversary of the Evan-

gelical Lutheran Sunday-school" of your city, to which I had the honor to belong many years gone into the past.

It was on the 14th of June, 1835, nearly forty-three years ago, that I and my brother were introduced into your school, and assigned to the care of the kind teachers of two classes—I to one teacher and my brother to another. He was my junior by two years. He remained but a short time, our father having died in the next month, I think. My brother was sent to England to our relatives there. I remained for some time after this, and was adopted by the Rev. Thomas F. Scott, then Presbyterian minister in your city, afterwards bishop in the Protestant Episcopal Church, and by him educated. He has since gone to his rest in heaven.

I am sorry that it is out of my power to promise myself the exquisite pleasure of being present with you on the joyous occasion. My engagements, previously made, are such that I am compelled to send you these short lines to assure you of my hearty appreciation of your kindness in thinking of the poor little Jewish boys of 1835.

With this assurance of my thankfulness, and of my regrets at not being able to be present with you, I might close this note; but my own conscience, and the circumstances attending my introduction into your Sunday-school, forbid that I should thus close without bearing testimony in a public manner, if you choose, to the faithfulness of one of your then modest but zealous lady teachers, since, I suppose, gone to her

reward in "our Father's" house on high. Sad enough for me, I forget her name, but I cherish the hope that when I reach heaven, which I hope will not be very long, I shall find her upon the threshold watching and waiting for me, to present *me*, as she has done my sainted brother, to Jesus, as another star in the crown of her rejoicing. It seems to me the thought is not irreverent, I hope. I shall thank her *first*, as she will first take me by the hand, as the instrumentality of my being brought to heaven, and *then* shout glory be to *Jesus*—a sinner saved by grace.

This reference requires that I should explain the circumstances. It was the Sunday before the 14th of June, 1835, that I and my brother were proceeding down the street on which your church-house now stands, towards the canal, for the purpose of casting a net for fish. A lady who met us on her way to the Sunday-school, observing the net which I carried, obstructing our way by presenting herself immediately before us, saying, in a most pleasant manner and with a bright winning smile in her eye, "Why, my little boys, where are you going this morning?" To which I, being the elder, replied, "We are going down to the canal, fishing." "Fishing!" she exclaimed. "What! going *fishing to-day*!—Sunday!" "O, yes," I replied; "we are Jews; Sunday is nothing more to us than another day." "O, well," said she, "I wouldn't go fishing on *Sunday*. I have heard of little boys, and grown people, too, getting drowned on *Sunday* while fishing or sailing on the water for pleasure—I wouldn't go fishing." "O, yes, ma'am, we must go, because we have borrowed a net and must take it back to-morrow," I said. "But look here, little boys, wouldn't you like to go to Sunday-school?" "No, ma'am, we are Jews. You know Jews don't go to Sunday-school." "Well, now," said she, still persisting, "you ask your father to let you come to Sunday-school next Sunday—*there* it is, just over there; we have nice books for the boys and girls to read, and a great many little boys and girls, and such a good superintendent and kind teachers; you would like it, I know. You ask your father to

let you come." "Well, I will," I answered, "but I don't think he will let us go." "You ask him," she said, "and I think he will. I will be there, and *look out for you*. Now, boys, be sure and come." So saying, she smiled and passed on, while we went down to the canal fishing. My brother fell into the "lock" and came very near being drowned; and I only saved the borrowed net—having let it get off my arm in trying to save him—by diving after it. I then thought very seriously of what the lady had said. But after pulling off our clothes and drying them in the sun, with our backs quite blistered by the scorching sun of a Georgia day in June, we returned home. During the week, we got the consent of our father to go to Sunday-school. On next Sunday, June 14th, 1835, we both, with tremulous emotion, approached the Sunday-school.

While hesitating at the steps of the old church, and with a half mind to go back, the *same lady* who had met us on our way fishing the Sunday before, *came to the door, evidently looking for her expected boys*. There we were, shy and afraid. "Ah!" she said, "I was looking for you. I thought you would come. Come in"—and taking us by the hand, she led us up to the superintendent, whose name, I think, was Felt, and introduced us. We were assigned to classes. And hence, our names on the "*Old Records*" of 1835.

My brother became a minister of the gospel. He graduated in South Carolina, and afterwards took a full course in theology in the same class with Dr. Wingate, now president of Wake Forest College in North Carolina, at Greenville, S. C., and became the honored and loved pastor of a church in Georgetown, S. C. His name was Lazarus Magnus Cohen, not William Lazarus, as you have it, and of whom you are pleased to ask his "address." He has "ceased from his labors," and may now be found as a bright jewel in the crown of her rejoicing, who herself stands near to God's throne, and who, on that memorable day, with faith in her God, said: "*Boys, I wouldn't go fishing; come to the Sunday-school next Sunday.*"

My mother still lives in your city. She is, to-day, a staunch Israelite—seventy-seven years of age. I am still left to labor for my Master. For thirty-four years, nearly, I have been preaching the gospel in Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina. For forty-three years I have been a *friend to Sunday-schools*.

May your fiftieth anniversary be a joyous occasion! May the above facts stimulate you to perseverance in the faithful discharge of your duties as

Sunday-school workers. I cannot but believe *they* are a *great* and *powerful* means for evangelizing the world. In the language of the *great* Apostle of the Reformation, Luther, as I say that the Sunday-school is a chief instrumentality in bringing *mankind* to Christ and winning the world for God: "*Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise; God help me.*"

With Christian regards and salutation, I am yours in the gospel.

A. D. COHEN.

CLASS WORK.

DEAR TEACHERS: Having availed ourselves of the many Lesson Helps and having fully prepared our Lesson Plan, we are ready for the sowing of the seed, that upon which all the result depends—the Class Work.

Start the lesson with a brief Review of preceding week's lesson. There are various methods of conducting this—a most excellent one, which has been pursued with success for three years, being to let the members of the class take turns at writing a short essay upon the last lesson and reading it aloud the few opening moments. Or this work may be distributed and several essays be written—different members taking different points—upon the history, the incidents, the various spiritual lessons. Examine briefly upon the new lesson to see if it has been prepared, by requiring one statement from each member concerning it. You are now ready to teach the lesson, its truths and significance, according to your plan. This is not to be done by plain didactics nor dry sentences, but by questions, examples and illustrations, the truth is to be clearly and forcibly impressed. Let the language be adapted to the pupils, such as they can readily understand; full of sympathy, earnestness, love. Have a definite point of practical assistance for each member; bear in mind their manner of life and impart something of use to them in that daily walk. Ask questions, suggestive, developing, requiring thought. There are many

ways of conducting these, but no teacher can lay down rules for another, as individuality will determine it; only remember—that no teacher has a right to talk, to teach, unless she has *something* to impress—something for each waiting heart.

The great mistake in teaching is a wandering from the subject, an aimless rambling over much territory: keep to the plan and avoid useless questions—abhor trifling. Leave a solemn impression—one deep truth. Be not severe, impatient, but cordial and animated. Again, we must say, because so very important—leave a solemn impression. It has, lately, been brought against a class, as a very selfish and un-Christian-like manner of deportment, that the teacher and class depart so soon after the close of school and with little conversation. "A little heaven of their own," was, with some sarcasm, said of them. Yet look beneath the actions, at the motives, and they are commendatory. Is the teacher to let all those solemn impressions, which it has taken her heart's prayers and hours of anxiety and study to produce, be dissipated by a little thoughtless conversation? No, let them go with the solemn thought still present, to influence them at home.

A last loving word individually to each, a warm, tender pressure of the hand at parting, will make itself felt throughout the week. Do not neglect it. Naturally, this brings us to the

Teacher's Personal Relations to the Class, which we will consider next month. Let us still strive, with that

ever ready Help, to reach nearer to that Ideal Teacher.

PUELLA.

The Augsburg Oracle.

OUR QUESTION BOX.

BY ROBT. B. KINSELL, WASHINGTON, D. C.

(THE QUESTION BOX invites short, practical contributions from all who love the Lord and His work in the Sunday-school. *Bear in mind, dear friends, that we have space only for matter relating to Sunday-school work.* Send to the above address.)

Q. A city friend wishes to know what teachers do for those of their scholars who leave the city for the summer.

A. We will suggest some of the things you may do. You may, and we hope you will, show your absent scholars that your loving interest follows them. Send them Lesson-Leaves and Sunday-school papers, etc., regularly. Write letters to them. Remember them often and faithfully in prayer. Let them know you do this, and that your heart's desire and prayer to God is that they may be saved. Urge them to find a Sunday-school where they are, and to attend it. If there be none, to have a home Sunday-school, and keep up with the lessons. Study that you may be found a better teacher for them when they return.

Q. Why do we not have silence and attention when the Superintendent is addressing the school?

A. Really, brother, we do not know. Study the matter yourself in your own school; see if you can't find out the answer there. It may be the fault of the Superintendent. He may need to be brightened and awaked. It has often been said that you can't have the attention of children unless you give them something to attend to. Perhaps teachers are lacking in the matter of a good example here, and in watchful restraint over their scholars. We have never felt like blaming children very severely for inattention. If one interests them, they will ordinarily be quiet and attentive enough. A Superintendent has no right to let any one

abuse the children with a long, dull speech, and as little right to do so himself. One of his duties is to protect them from such an infliction. We have not answered this question exactly as we intended in starting, but in writing on, the thought hurried into our mind that the fault in this matter is not always with the children.

Q. A lover of the Lord asks: "How can we do more in the good work for Jesus this year than we did the last?"

A. If we do not more, we shall do less this year than last. We cannot continue in the same measure. Why do you not ask, rather, more to-day than yesterday, more this week than last? It should be a daily growth, advance, increasing activity. To each, perhaps, a somewhat differing answer might come in detail, but this one answer will fit us all alike. How can we do more for Jesus? Love self less, love Him more, get nearer to Him. Doing is the fruit of loving. Study our Bibles more. The more earnestly we study the Word of God, the more thoroughly are we furnished unto all good works—set on fire of the Spirit, and led into better, and larger, and wiser working.

Q. A Superintendent asked a member of the Pastor's Adult Bible Class to teach a class of girls whose teacher happened to be absent. He wished to be excused, as "he had not looked at the lesson." Would it not be well for that pastor to stir up his class into giving some preparatory study to the lesson?

A. We think it would. A teacher ought to expect study of the lesson from all the members of his class, and show them that he expects it.

Q. How can teachers help the Superintendent?

A. By recognizing him cheerfully always as their superior officer; by their prayers, genuine sympathy, hearty co-operation in all things good he may undertake for the school; by not think

ing that they could have done it better, or could have done it differently, or could have done some other thing that would have been better; by not acting as if they thought they could; by attending teachers' meetings; by preserving order in their own classes; by being in their places with their classes at the opening of the school; by never being absent unless compelled; by providing a proper substitute when absent of necessity, and in many other ways.

Q. How can a Superintendent help his teachers?

A. By knowing them and visiting them at their homes; by getting very near to them, and getting them very near to him; by being equally kind, equally attentive to all; by loving, helpful sympathy; by commending their good work; by helpful suggestions looking to improvement and management in teaching; by being in all things, himself first, what he would have them to be; by leading, not pushing them; by holding sacred for them from all interruption the time set apart for teaching; by laboring to make the teachers' meetings so good, so interesting, and so helpful, that the teachers can't stay away; by being and doing all things that a Superintendent ought to be and to do.

Q. A dyspeptic question groans its way into the Question Box, from a doubting, desponding teacher, who is in the giving-up mood, to whom "it is no use to try any more."

A. We omit the question; its general character may be guessed. We answer without noting the sex; it may be supposed of "all sexes." The grumbling spirit, the complaining spirit, and the desponding spirit, when strong enough, are very weakening spirits in Sunday-school work. As to the last, our work is sometimes to be done in the shadow, or what we think the shadow of discouragement; but not the less faithfully for that. It may best be so now, to make us and to keep us humble. Let us faint not, and by and by, if we may not write it here, we may read hereafter a chapter of the success of the "unsuccessful." Do not expect your heedless, perhaps worse, scholars, to be changed at once into patterns of all that is proper. Perfect children are

only in books and good stories, and do not appear there even so often as formerly. The real child is ever uncertain, and climbs towards goodness slowly. Children are not molded, and finished off, and set aside completed, in a hurry. Teaching is not a single sublime effort and then a sudden sublime result. It is little by little, day by day; it is a work of infinite patience and gentleness and long suffering. But there is no failure; working for God and with God there cannot be. The giving life, and making to grow, are from above; the planting and watering is partly ours; and the watchful, tender, never-absent care is also partly ours. We are to trust and pray, and hold ourselves humbly, as if God did it all; and we are to work and watch as if all depended on our effort. The work is the Lord's; yes, but it is ours also. It is the Lord's; therefore it cannot fail; it is ours, therefore let us be diligent. Of the outcome of it God will take care.

—THE National Temperance Society has just published, in a pamphlet of thirty five pages, an address by the Rev. Joseph Cook, of Boston, with the above title. It is an able presentation of the relations of the liquor-traffic to popular government. Its admonitions concerning the public perils which the drink-traffic involves are timely and of profound importance. The pamphlet should have a very wide circulation, co-extensive with the reputation of its eloquent and distinguished author. Price, single copy ten cents; per dozen, one dollar. Address J. N. STEARNS, Publishing Agent, 58 Reade Street, New York.

We are indebted to this Society also for other temperance tracts and papers.

LIFE AFTER DEATH; or Post-Mortem Accountability, by Joseph A. Seiss, D. D., Philadelphia: Published by G. W. Frederick. It is issued in neat and attractive style, of 38 pages. Price, 15 cents per copy, or 10 copies for \$1.00. Address the Lutheran Bookstore, 117 North 6th Street, Philadelphia.

The publisher will please accept our thanks for a copy, forwarded by his courtesy.

GENERAL NOTES.

THE GOSPELS.—There is but one Gospel, but there are four accounts or histories of it, and these are sometimes called "The Four Gospels," in distinction from the Epistles and other books that go to make up the New Testament. The writers of these are often called "The Evangelists," because they give the evangel or glad tidings of a Saviour and his atoning work. These writers are not to be regarded as passive instruments, like pens, in the Spirit's hands, but rather as the pensmen of the Holy Ghost, giving accounts of the same thing, but accounts varying in style, etc., according to the personality of each of the writers. In their statements of the same things verbal variations are noticeable, just such as would naturally occur in reports by different persons—these variations involving no fundamental difference, and really attesting the truthfulness of the several writers and all absence of dishonesty and collusion among them. Matthew's gospel is symbolized by the image of a bullock; Mark's by that of a lion; Luke's by that of a man; and John's by that of an eagle.

LUKE.—Of the writer of the third Gospel we have little certain knowledge. He was a man of learning, as his writings show; was a physician (Col. iv. 14), a Gentile, and one of Paul's traveling companions. He was not an eye-witness of what he records, but had "perfect understanding of all things" of which he writes, "from the very first." He also wrote the Acts. The Gospel was written before the Acts, and somewhere, likely, between the years 50 and 60 A. D. It is addressed to his friend Theophilus, a Greek, and intended for the Gentiles. It makes prominent the Christ as bearer of man's nature and atoning for mankind, hence symbolized by the image of a man.

CHRONOLOGY.—The present era, to which we put the letters A. D., abbreviations for *Anno Domini*, the year of our Lord, was fixed by Dionysius Exiguus, a learned monk of the 6th cen-

tury. Hence it is called the "Dionysian era." It is now acknowledged by all scholars that there is an error of about four years in this computation. The date of Christ's birth is commonly accepted as being B. C. 4, and a correct enumeration of this present year of our Lord would make us to be living in A. D. 1882 instead of 1878. For Christ was born before the death of Herod the Great (Matt. ii. 1, etc.), and that monarch died a little before the Passover in the fourth year before the beginning of our present era.

There used to be a great deal of difficulty in harmonizing the data of Luke ii. 1 with known facts of history, the governorship of Cyrenius being known to have begun A. D. 6, or ten years later than the time above assigned for Jesus' birth. Later research, however, has made it highly probable that Cyrenius was *twice* Governor of Syria, and that his first term extended from about B. C. 4 to B. C. 1. This relieves the difficulty.

—The precise time of the year when Jesus was born is not determined in the Scriptures. Some argue that the traditional time, December 25th, could not have been the real time, because shepherds were out in the fields all night with their flocks, and this would not have been the case in December. But this statement has been proved inaccurate, and there is plenty of the best authority for saying that Christmas time is in Palestine a very favorable time for feeding flocks in the open fields, and that it often is one of the loveliest periods of the whole year. There is no certainty, however, that such was the date. It is as good a time, however, as any, to observe in honor of our Lord's birth, and we do well to appropriately keep it. "Christmas day," says McClintock and Strong's Encyclopedia, "is observed by nearly all churches in the world, except the Dissenters of the British Islands and the American churches that have sprung from them."

—The historical data given in Luke

iii. 1, 2, give us the year of Rome 780, corresponding to A. D. 24, as the time of John's public appearing, when he was thirty years old. It probably did not continue more than a year and a half.

—The following order of events is taken from the Harmony of the Four Gospels by Frederick Gardiner, D. D., and may serve as a good guide in reading the Scriptures in connection with our lesson.

Preface to John's Gospel. John i. 1-18.

Preface to Luke's Gospel. Luke i. 1-4.

Gabriel announces to Zacharias the birth of John. Luke i. 5-25.

Gabriel's Annunciation to the Virgin Mary. Luke i. 26-38.

Mary visits Elizabeth. Luke i. 39-56.

Birth of John the Baptist. Luke i. 57-80.

An angel appears to Joseph in a dream. Matt. i. 18-25.

Jesus is born. Luke ii. 1-7; Matt. i. 25.

The Genealogies. Luke iii. 23-38; Matt. i. 1-17.

Birth of Jesus announced by angels to the shepherds. Luke ii. 8-20.

The circumcision and presentation of Jesus in the temple. Luke ii. 21-38.

Visit of the Magi. Matt. ii. 1-12.

Flight into Egypt. Matt. ii. 13-18.

The return, and settlement at Nazareth. Luke ii. 39, 40; Matt. ii. 19-23.

Jesus at twelve years of age. Luke ii. 41-52.

The Ministry of John the Baptist. Luke iii. 1-18; Mark i. 1-8; Matt. iii. 1-12.

Baptism of our Lord. Luke iii. 21, 22; Mark i. 9-11; Matt. iii. 13-17.

The Temptation. Luke iv. 1-13; Mark i. 12, 13; Matt. iv. 1-11.

Testimony of John the Baptist. John i. 19-34.

Interview of John's Disciples with the Lord. John i. 35-43.

Jesus going into Galilee. John i. 44-52.

The Marriage at Cana, and Departure to Capernaum. John ii. 1-12.

Our Lord's first Passover—He purifies the temple. John ii. 13-25.

Interview with Nicodemus. John iii. 1-21.

John baptizing and testifying. John iii. 22-36.

John seized. Luke iii. 19, 20; Mark vi. 17-20; Matt. xiv. 3-5.

Our Lord goes to Galilee. Luke iv. 14; Mark i. 14; Matt. iv. 12; John iv. 1-3.

Discourse with the woman of Samaria. John iv. 4-42.

Jesus teaches publicly in Galilee. Luke iv. 14, 15; Mark i. 14, 15; Matt. iv. 17; John iv. 43-45.

At Cana Jesus heals the nobleman's son in Capernaum. John iv. 46-54.

Jesus teaches at Nazareth and is rejected. Luke iv. 16-30.

—THE BLACKBOARD ILLUSTRATIONS of last number were by mistake credited to Rev. J. Croll Baum, of Trenton, N. J., who is known to have a very facile pen in this direction. They were, however, designed by Mr. J. C. Stock, of Carlisle, our regular contributor in this department; and we want him to have the credit of them, as they were very creditable indeed.

—How "eighty-two" got into the place of "fifty-two," in fixing the chronology of the first lesson last month, we do not know. Any careful reader would notice and correct the mistake.

—THE Report of the Proceedings of the Atlanta Convention has appeared very promptly and in good style. Single copies will be sent post-paid to any address on receipt of 25 cents, by L. H. Biglow, Treasurer, 76 East 9th St., New York.

C. C. MURPHY, successor to Stoddart & Murphy, No. 206 Broadway, *Evening Post* Building, New York, makes a specialty of Sunday-school publication advertising. In our dealings with Mr. M. we have always found him prompt and reliable, and we would advise any advertiser who wishes to reach the entire Sunday-school world to send for one of his circulars. We wish him all the success possible, and recommend him to the advertising public as in every way worthy their confidence.—*S. S. Monthly Journal*.

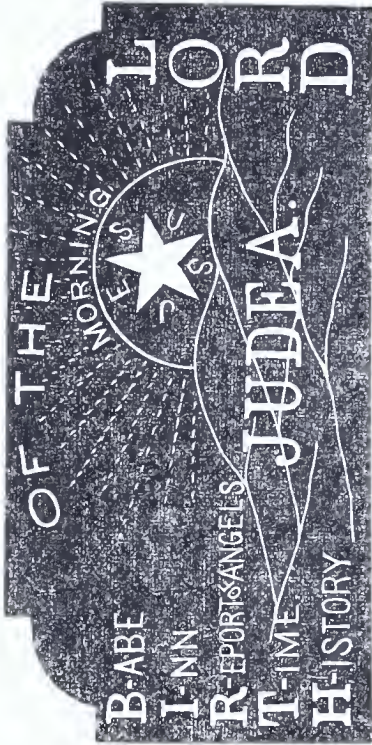
Lessons for July.

COMMENTS BY PROF. H. L. BAUGHER, M. A. BLACKBOARD ILLUSTRATIONS, BY J. C. STOCK, CARLISLE.

BIRTH OF CHRIST THE LORD.

July 7.

Luke ii. 8-20.



CONSIDER the topics in the acrostic—in connection with the rising morning star, to guide the pilgrims through the dark night of sin—Jesus the Sun of righteousness rising up from behind the Judean hills to give light to the entire world.

COMMENTS ON THE LESSON.

An enrollment, or census, of all citizens having been ordered by the authorities both of the Roman Empire and of Syria, Joseph and Mary went up from their home in Nazareth of Galilee to Bethlehem in Judea, the headquarters of that part of the census which comprised the descendants of David; for the Jewish custom was to register thus from their ancestral house or family: Roman custom was to enroll the women and children too, as we do in our census-taking. Bethlehem was about eighty miles from Nazareth. It was while Mary was thus at Bethlehem that the child was born which had been announced to her by the angel, as recorded in chapter i. 26, 35.

Announcement by Angels.

Verse 8. THERE WERE IN THE SAME COUNTRY of Bethlehem, in that neighborhood, SHEPHERDS, whose occupation was a very common one in those days and lands. Abel was a shepherd, and ever since his day shepherds have been conspicuous in sacred history. Moses and David both were shepherds once. Under the figure of a shepherd, God's care of his people is often tenderly set forth in the Scriptures. Perhaps no text is better known or more loved than that one—"The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want;" and when we sing, "Saviour, like a shepherd, lead us," we seem to come into relations of tender nearness to our gracious Lord. The Judean shepherds were a favored few on the occasion set forth in our lesson. ABIDING IN THE FIELD, not in houses in the town or city, but living in the open air, and KEEPING WATCH, probably by turns, OVER THEIR FLOCK BY NIGHT. There was more outdoor life then and there than with us; and we have before spoken of this as giving occasion for a study of the stars and a mapping out of imaginary figures in the different constellations. Watch had to be kept over the flock to keep them from wandering and to keep off evil men and beasts.

Verse 9. AND, LO. A great surprise and astonishment to them; but it need not be to us, for we know that God is wont to visit and exalt with his favor the humble, choosing shepherds before kings. An ANGEL OF THE LORD (there is no article in the Greek), not *the* angel of the Lord in the sense of the second person in the Trinity, as we have usually explained that expression in the Old Testament. For this time the message was *about*, not *by*, that adorable second person in the Godhead. CAME UPON THEM, all at once, probably appearing in the air overhead. AND THE GLORY OF THE LORD, such as they had read and heard of in connection with previous sacred history, SHONE

ROUND ABOUT THEM, still further impressing their minds with the supernatural and heavenly character of what was transpiring. No wonder THEY WERE SORE AFRAID at such a visitation. So the women were affrighted by the vision of angels at the sepulchre. But as then, so now, came the assuring words

Verse 10. FEAR NOT. God does not reveal himself or his plans, in special glory, for men's destruction, but for their salvation, and when his ministering spirits come near to commune with men, it is not to make them afraid. The time will come when "all the holy angels" will accompany the Judge of all the earth to judgment, but that will be after these days of grace. I BRING GOOD TIDINGS is the translation of one word in the Greek, and it is Anglicised in the word *evangelize*, and in old English the word *evangel* was used. The same word, (evangelium) appears in German and Latin, and the languages belonging to the Latin family. The *ev-angel* is the good message (angel), bringing tidings which contained GREAT JOY TO ALL THE PEOPLE (for the article belongs here) of the Jews, and through them to all people that on earth do dwell. The gospel (good-spell) is the bearer of joy to the world.

Verse 11. FOR. Introduces the reason why great joy should follow the tidings. UNTO YOU, representing Jews first and mankind next. IS BORN "The Word became *flesh* and dwelt among us;" "born of a woman;" taking on him human nature. IN THE CITY OF DAVID, the ancestral town where David was born, where the prophecy (Micah v. 2) had said his greatest descendant should first see the light; in Bethlehem, "house of bread," the true bread from heaven is given, that gives eternal life. A SAVIOUR. And that in the full sense of the Word. Man, fallen, lost, banished from Paradise, unable by all his efforts to get back, needed just that; man needs that, it is his greatest, his only want—a *Saviour*. This had been promised again and again, with increasing clearness, from the dark hour of the fall, and now the bright and morning star had come, bursting forth on that Judean night! Joy! Glad tidings!

Great joy! CHRIST, the Messiah, the Anointed, long promised, long-expected, has come, Christ, THE LORD. Even though born in Bethlehem, little town, born of a woman, laid in a manger, wrapped in swaddling clothes, yet that babe is THE LORD Jehovah, called by the divinely taught Isaiah (ix. 6), "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." The Word which not only "was in the beginning with God" but also "was God," this Word "became flesh!" "Being in the form of God, he took upon him the form of a servant." In verse 9 our author uses "Lord" twice in the sense of *Jehovah*, and so it seems used here, as also in the Old Testament constantly.

Verse 12. And this to you is the sign—ye shall find a babe swaddled in a manger. So the verse accurately reads. They needed something to certify their being right when they should go to look for the child. SWADDLING CLOTHES were such as babes were usually wrapped in, as they are still, in their earliest days. A MANGER is a trough out of which cattle are wont to eat; it is one of the equipments of a stable. Even the "inn" of that little town could not have been a very elegant or comfortable place. Farrar has this description of a Syrian inn: "A khan is a low structure, built of rough stones, and generally only a single story in height. It consists for the most part of a square inclosure, in which the cattle can be tied up in safety for the night, and an arched recess for the accommodation of travelers. The paved floor of the large khan might contain a series of such recesses, which are, in fact, low small rooms with no front wall to them. They are, of course, perfectly public; everything that takes place in them is visible to every person in the khan. They are also totally devoid of even the most ordinary furniture. The traveler may bring his own carpet if he likes, may sit cross-legged upon it for his meals, and may lie upon it at night. As a rule, too, he must bring his own food, attend to his own cattle, and draw his own water from the neighboring spring. He would neither expect nor require attendance,

and would pay only the merest trifle for the advantage of shelter, safety, and a floor on which to lie. But if he chances to arrive late, and the *leeuwans* were all occupied by earlier guests, he would have no choice but to be content with such accommodation as he could find in the court-yard below, and secure for himself and his family such small amount of cleanliness and decency as are compatible with an unoccupied corner on the filthy area, which must be shared with horses, mules, and camels. * * * * * In Palestine it not unfrequently happens that the entire khan, or at any rate the portion of it in which the animals are housed, is one of those innumerable caves which abound in the limestone rocks of its central hills." Tradition strongly points to a cave of this kind as the place where our Saviour was born, and over the supposed place there now stands the Church of the Nativity, making, in its elegance, a sharp contrast with its original condition as a stable. Travelers in Switzerland are struck with the close connection of the abodes respectively of the human beings and the beasts, they often being under the same roof; and Dr. Thomson (Land and Book) says of the Holy Land, "It is common to find two sides of the one room, where the native farmer resides with his cattle, fitted up with these mangers, and the remainder elevated about two feet higher for the accommodation of the family. The mangers are built of small stones and mortar, in the shape of a box; or rather of a kneading-trough, and, when cleaned up and whitewashed, as they often are in summer, they do very well to lay little babes in. Indeed, our own children have slept in them in our rude summer retreats on the mountains." All must confess, however, that such accommodations are indeed *rude*; and yet in them the long-expected great Messiah, the Saviour of the world, was to be sought and found. The King of kings comes into the world with little of royal surroundings!

Verses 13 and 14. Yet, withal, consider that his humble birth is announced by an angel, and, upon its announcement, **SUDDENLY THERE WAS**

WITH THE ANGEL A MULTITUDE OF THE HEAVENLY HOST, a more than royal retinue, a shining phalanx of heaven's army. This is more than kingly, it is full of glory! **PRAISING GOD.** It was the Father that sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world; that little child was his unspeakable gift. **GLORY TO GOD.** The end of all things. God's glory cannot be increased, but it can be declared, set forth, proclaimed. **IN THE HIGHEST.** In the highest heavens or in the highest strains—excelling glory. **AND ON EARTH PEACE.** This is the second part of the angel's song, and is amplified in the next clause, which, according to the best authorities, reads not **GOOD WILL TO MEN**, but to or among *men of good will, men of God's pleasure*. See the connection of this word, as translated "good pleasure," in Eph. i. 5, 9; Phil. ii. 13; 2 Thess. i. 11. The good will is that of God to men, not of men to God or towards one another. The verb in iii. 22, "In thee I *am well pleased*," has the same root as this noun rendered "good will" or *good pleasure*; only as men are in Christ, the Son of God's love, can they be reconciled, have peace and be objects of God's complacent good pleasure. His peace is not human fellowship, but fellowship between God and man, a subduing of the enmity that came in by the fall. The clauses of this song answer to one another as follows: "Glory" to "peace," "in the highest" to "on earth," "to God" to "to men of good will." This hymn of the angels has been perpetuated in the Church by the *Gloria in Excelsis*, which can be traced to the second or third century, and has been sung in the Church ever since; it is one of the connecting links with the early church; it is sometimes called the *greater doxology*, and finds a place in our "Book of Worship," just after the Creed. It is full of the marrow of the gospel. Schaff calls it "a truly catholic, classical, and undying form of devotion, sounding from age to age and generation to generation."

Verified by Shepherds.

Verse 15. **THE ANGELS WERE GONE AWAY** FROM this visit to the shepherds very soon. They had accomplished

their mission and must needs go INTO HEAVEN, their home, again. Angels' visits have been called "few and far between;" this is rather the language of unbelief than of faith; but their visits, so far as recorded, have always been *short*. LET US NOW GO * * * * AND SEE, for to this end THE LORD HATH MADE KNOWN UNTO US the wonderful event. They first believed and afterward saw. Here too, as in verses 9 and 11, "Lord" must mean Jehovah.

Verse 16. MARY is put before JOSEPH. IN THE (not *a*) MANGER. Everything just as it had been told them.

Vrese 17. THEY MADE KNOWN ABROAD, to whoever were thereabout, what had been told them by the angel visitor, and all about the angels' song. So they became the first human preachers of the gospel.

Verses 18 and 19. WHILST ALL THEY THAT HEARD their story WONDERED, MARY KEPT ALL THESE THINGS AND PONDERED THEM IN HER HEART. Here was much to produce wonder, and much to cause thoughtful persons to ponder. But 'tis easier to wonder than to ponder, to be flushed with excitement than to weigh events. "Mary appears here," says Van Oosterzee, "as well as in Ch. i. 29 and ii. 51, richly adorned with that incorruptible ornament which an apostle describes (1 Pet. iii. 4) as the highest adorning of women. Heart, mind and memory are here all combined in the service of faith."

Verse 20. RETURNED, GLORIFYING AND PRAISING GOD. A new song had been put in their mouths. They go back to their calling; it was there the herald angels found them. Von Oosterzee considers "their experience the best example of the first beatitude."

The contrasts presented in the events of this lesson are easily traced, and they are mightily impressive.

Read Is. vii. 14, ix. 6; John i. 14; Gal. iv. 4; Phil. ii. 5-7; and compare the statement of the Creed, "Conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary." Can you say "*I believe?*"

Anger dieth quickly with a good man.

THE CHILDHOOD OF JESUS.

July 14.

Luke ii. 40-52.

COMMENTS ON THE LESSON.

Very little is said in the sacred Scriptures about the childhood of Jesus. We have an account of his circumcision, of his presentation in the temple, of the visit of the Magi, of the flight into Egypt, and of the return and settlement at Nazareth. After that the account in to-day's lesson is all we have up to his thirtieth year. His very silence goes to prove the superhuman character of the Scriptures; for mere human writings would have had much to say about one who had so remarkable an entrance into the world: and even so we find apocryphal "gospels" of the infancy of Jesus, filled with accounts of the wonderful performances of the Saviour in his early years. These, however, have all been made up out of the national fancies of men, whilst the statements and the silence of our Bible writers alike prove the truthfulness of their record.

Growing in Years and Grace.

Verse 40. THE CHILD is spoken of as a child, not a prodigy, not a wonder-working infant or lad. He GREW as other children grow, having a body like theirs, and WAXED STRONG, increased in physical strength. The words "in spirit" ought perhaps to be omitted in this place. FILLED WITH WISDOM. Verse 52 says he "*increased in wisdom.*" His human mind developed. He gained knowledge and skill to use it. Like other children, he learned more and more, developing consciously to himself and manifestly to others, day by day. Van Oosterzee (in Lange) says, "Not only the body, but the soul and spirit of the Lord, grew incessantly and regularly. When he was a child, he spake as a child, before he could, with full consciousness, testify of God as his Father. Undoubtedly the awakening of his divine-human consciousness, his recognition of himself, formed part of the filling with wisdom." He then quotes this admirable passage from Sartorius: "The eye which comprehends heaven and earth within its range of vision, does not, by betaking itself to darkness or closing its lid, deprive itself of its

power of sight, but merely resigns its far-reaching activity; so does the Son of God close his all-seeing eye, and betake himself to human darkness on earth, and then, as a child of man, open his eye on earth, as the Light of the World, gradually increasing in brilliancy till it shines at the right hand of the Father, in perfect splendor." AND THE GRACE OF GOD WAS UPON HIM. God's favor rested on him and was manifest in his development. Compare 1 Sam. ii. 26; Jer. i. 5; Luke i. 80; 2 Tim. iii. 15. God's grace is neglected and resisted in the cases of those who grow in years and not in grace.

Growing in Consciousness.

Verse 41. HIS PARENTS. They stood to him in this relation; Joseph was looked upon as the lad's father; and Luke is neither misled nor misleading in calling them so. WENT TO JERUSALEM EVERY YEAR TO THE FEAST OF THE PASSOVER. They were religious people, and observed the church festivals. The passover was one of the three occasions on which all the males of Israel were required, by the law to appear at the temple. The women were not obliged to go, but Mary's pious disposition led her to go along with her husband year by year.

Verse 42. WHEN HE WAS TWELVE YEARS OLD. At this age a Jewish boy was called "a son of the law," and was bound by its requirements. At this period too every boy, whether rich or poor, was, by rabbinical law and national custom, obliged to learn a trade. It was a crisis period in a Jew's life. He passed out of the circle of "little ones" then. It corresponds to our *confirmation* time, although that with us is not so definitely fixed by years. It must be remembered, too, that a lad was more advanced and mature in Syria and Palestine, at that age, than among us. Twelve years of age there is equal to fourteen or fifteen here.

Verse 43. FULFILLED THE DAYS. The Passover lasted seven days. For an account of its institution and features, see Ex. xii. 3-17; Deut. xvi. 1-17; in which latter chapter account is given of the three great festivals. AS

(or, when) THEY RETURNED, THE CHILD JESUS TARRIED BEHIND IN JERUSALEM. Why did he do it? No doubt he was thoroughly absorbed in those scenes and occurrences. Were they not all prefigurings of himself, and did not a consciousness of his own origin and destiny come crowding upon his active mind? The lamb of the daily sacrifice, the blood of the Passover, the temple occupying the site where once Abraham lifted up the knife over the only-begotten son—oh, how these scenes and places must have transfixed the boy's attention! The return was little in his thoughts, most likely; and his party had set off before he was half aware of it. So it may have been, though we are not told more than the fact of his remaining behind. AND JOSEPH AND HIS MOTHER KNEW NOT of his being left. This might very easily have happened. At such a time the city was overcrowded with people; so much so that multitudes had to pitch tents for shelter, camping about the city. Their number at such times has been estimated at from two to four millions. Friends and neighbors were wont to travel together, and, in setting out, one might stay behind and not be missed. The frequency with which children, and even grown persons, got lost from their friends, at the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia, will serve to illustrate this.

Verses 44 and 45. SUPPOSING HIM TO HAVE BEEN IN THE COMPANY—somewhere among the Nazareth party—among whom he was well known—among whom, likely, there were other boys of his age—they WENT A DAY'S JOURNEY—kept on till they came to the stopping place for the night. What time in the day they left Jerusalem, or how far they had gone, we are not told. Jesus had always been a good boy, entirely trustworthy; his parents had confidence in him, and did not need to watch him. He had never yet caused them any trouble. He was a notable boy in this respect. He was moreover a boy of remarkable prudence and sense; they felt entirely easy about him till night, and when the company bivouacked they BEGAN TO SEEK HIM AMONG THEIR KINSFOLK, relatives, AND

ACQUAINTANCE. We can almost see them going about through the crowd, and asking if any of them had seen Jesus, confident, at first, that he would turn up somewhere there; but, gradually, their faces wearing a more anxious cast, as no traces of him were found, and it seemed possible, if not probable, that he was not there! WHEN THEY FOUND HIM NOT, how disturbed they must have been! Even the more so, because of the confidence they had previously felt. BACK AGAIN TO JERUSALEM they went, with thoughts different from any that ever yet had throbbed in their hearts. A new experience was trying them. Here again the sacred writer in no way gratifies natural human curiosity, but gives us the bare facts of the outward situation. SEEKING a lost child must be a distressing duty.

Verses 46 and 47. AFTER THREE DAYS. This probably includes the day of leaving Jerusalem for home, a second day for the return, and the next as the day of finding. The Jews counted parts of days as days. THEY FOUND HIM IN THE TEMPLE. Not unlikely this was one of the last places they sought him in, thinking that, boy-like, he would be more apt to be gratifying his curiosity in other parts of the city. It was in one of the porches, arcades, or chambers connected with the temple proper, that he was SITTING IN THE MIDST OF THE DOCTORS who were wont there to hold their sessions. The "doctors" were *teachers* of the law, rabbins, who were ready to teach the people, answer questions, and carry on discussions among themselves. The rabbinical books, Jewish commentaries on the law, were in large part made up from reports of these meetings. BOTH HEARING THEM, listening to what they had to say, learning their views, AND ASKING THEM QUESTIONS. Questions and answers characterized the intercourse in these gatherings, and Jesus joined in the accustomed way. The idea of his *disputing* with the Rabbins finds no foundation in the circumstances; and every idea of forwardness on the part of the boy of twelve should be banished from our conception of the scene. "He was there," as St. Luke shows us, "in all humility and rever-

ence to his elders, as an eager-hearted and gifted learner, whose enthusiasm kindled their admiration, and whose bearing won their esteem and love." (Farrar.)

ALL THAT HEARD HIM. The rabbins and whoever were within hearing, WERE ASTONISHED AT HIS UNDERSTANDING AND ANSWERS. He was wise beyond his years, and beyond the educational advantages which Nazareth could afford him. So, afterward, they said, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" But the schools of the Rabbins were not the only place where knowledge of God and the law could be gained. What answer then shall we give to the question, whence Jesus gained his education, that wisdom and understanding in which he increased and excelled? The reply was that his training was effected by *means*, among which may be reckoned: (1) The influence and instruction of the godly Mary and Joseph. (2) Communion with nature, God's works, so beautifully set forth from the lovely site of Nazareth. (3) The sacred scriptures, God's other book, which the boy studied and learned by heart. (4) The services of the synagogue at Nazareth. (5) Observation of men and things. (6) Communion with God by prayer. God gave Daniel and his comrades skill and understanding, and so also to Jesus. Moreover, Jesus was without the disadvantages which beset the finest minds of mere men, arising from the *depravity* of their powers by the fall and sin of man. His human nature was without depravity; his powers of mind and body were perfect.

Verse 48. AND WHEN THEY SAW HIM there, among the learned and those to whom common people were wont to do so much deference, and seemingly so at his ease, THEY WERE AMAZED. The suspense of sorrowful anxiety was now changed to a suspense of amazement. They can hardly believe their eyes, and for a while stand back in wonder. Then HIS MOTHER, full of motherly instincts, came up and said to him, SON, (child) WHY HAST THOU THUS DEALT (didst thou thus deal) WITH US? A mild reproof, the first one, likely, she had ever had occasion to

give him. THY FATHER AND I. "Not merely," says Van Oosterzee, "the only possible manner in which Mary could publicly speak to her son, of Joseph, but also an indisputable proof of the wisdom with which she brought up the child; a wisdom which taught her to say nothing yet to him of the mystery of his birth, and which had faith enough to wait till his own consciousness should be fully and clearly awakened to the fact of his being the Son of God." HAVE SOUGHT (were seeking) THEE, SORROWING. Greatly grieved.

Verses 49 and 50. HOW IS IT THAT YE SOUGHT (were seeking) ME? You might have known where to find me! WIST YE NOT, did ye not know, THAT I MUST BE ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS, (*in the things of my Father, or as some make it, in the house of my Father*)? This answer reveals his growing consciousness. He will follow his Father's business, and therefore they might, at first, have known they would find him in his Father's house! But was not that his father, standing by? (Mary had said "thy father" of him.) No; he was only so called. Mary and Joseph both knew that he had no human father, and was not born of ordinary generation; and had they forgotten the annunciation, the visit of the shepherds and their report of the angels' message and song, the presentation in the temple and Simeon and Anna's remarkable sayings about him, the flight into Egypt,—all the remarkable occurrences relating to his coming into the world, had they forgotten these? Not pettishly, but with composed, respectful dignity, the boy thus replied to his mother, giving her another word to lay up in her heart. These are the first recorded words of our Lord, and they contain the key-note of his mission, a comprehensive summary of his life's work. Compare with these words John iv. 34; viii. 29; ix. 4; xvii. 4; xix. 30. THEY UNDERSTOOD NOT. Perhaps they were too much excited to ponder them. As HIS MOTHER KEPT ALL THESE SAYINGS IN HER HEART (verse 51), she likely came to understand them better afterwards. But, withal, here is an evidence of that slow-

ness of heart to believe and understand God that characterizes the human race.

Obedience.

Verse 51. Notwithstanding the consciousness of divinity that was developing in this wondrous child, HE WENT DOWN WITH THEM to Nazareth, and WAS SUBJECT TO THEM as a natural dutiful son. Herein he is an example of filial obedience. In the family at Nazareth, with "brothers" and "sisters" (Matt. xiii. 55-56) growing up around and with him, engaged in daily labor in Joseph's carpenter shop (Mark vi. 3), he was "made in all things like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high-priest. * * * For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted."

Verse 52. In this time he went on increasing in WISDOM AND STATURE (*age* rather), AND IN FAVOR WITH GOD AND MAN. This is all we have recorded of the next eighteen years of this most wondrous life. "Great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh."

Reflections.

1. Whilst Jesus was like other boys in having a growing, developing body and soul, he was unlike them in being *faultless*.
2. His Father's business is *our* business too, if we can rightly be called "The sons of God!" Are we about it?
3. The Church, not as a building but as an institution, is the place for carrying on this business.
4. The Church festivals, now as well as then, serve as reminders and *stimuli* to this business. Pious pastors and people should neither forget nor neglect them. They are opportunities of grace.
5. Childhood and the family have been forever rendered sacred, since Jesus became a child and a dutiful member of a humble family.

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July 27.

Luke iii. 15-22

MINISTRY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

COMMENTS ON THE LESSON.

In his first chapter Luke gives an account of the special divine promise to Zacharias and Elizabeth, both descendants of the priestly family of Aaron, that they should have a son, they who were now old and had hitherto been childless; also the prophecy by the angel of his character, habits, and office as the forerunner of the Messiah; also an account of the visit made to Elizabeth, three months before her child was born, by Mary, already informed that she was to become the mother of our Lord; further, we have an account of his birth and circumcision, and of his father's eloquent, spirit-prompted song of praise, on the latter occasion. Of the child it is said, "The hand of the Lord was with him," and he "grew and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel," the period of his entering on his ministry.

John was six months older than Jesus. We have scarcely anything about the life of either of them up to thirty years of age. John was an austere man, of ascetic tendencies, and came upon a dark night in the world's history, like the morning star preceding the glorious sun. He preached repentance and the near coming of the kingdom of God; and commanded more than the respect of the whole Jewish people. They counted him a prophet, and flocked to his baptism.

Faithfulness in Office.

Verse 15. AS THE PEOPLE WERE IN EXPECTATION. Respecting those times Farrar says, "It was an age of transition, of uncertainty, of doubt. In the growth of general corruption, in the wreck of sacred institutions, in those dense clouds which were gathered more and more darkly on the political horizon, it must have seemed to many a pious Jew as if the fountains of the great deep were again being broken up. Already the sceptre had departed from his race; already its high-priesthood was contemptuously tampered with by Idumean tetrarchs or Roman procurators; already the chief influence over his degraded Sanhedrim was in the hands

of supple Herodians or wily Sadducees. It seemed as if nothing were left for his consolation but an increased fidelity to Mosaic institutions, and a deepening intensity of Messianic hopes." And in the minds of those who were not thus pious there was a feeling of unrest, an expectation of a change, a looking for a deliverer, based on the Messianic traditions. There *was* at this time a general *expectation* among the Jews, and surrounding peoples were not unaware of its existence. But there were many and false views associated with this expectation. The Zealots were looking for a warrior Messiah, the school of Shammai were expecting a legalist, the Essenes an ascetic, and the philosophic schools some divine vision. Naturally then, in view of his character, his conduct, his sudden appearing out of desert seclusion, ALL MEN WERE Musing, balancing this and that, setting one thing over against another, IN THEIR HEARTS, and likely hesitating to give their thoughts utterance, CONCERNING JOHN, WHETHER HE WERE THE CHRIST, the Messiah, OR NOT. John was a most extraordinary person. We know that from the records of revelation. The people generally knew it then from the manner of the man, and the public ministry upon which he entered as one commissioned from on high. In his appearance and in his preaching he was a very Elijah among them, without fear or favor admonishing all classes, as he preached repentance and a new life. The times, fearfully corrupt, needed such a herald of righteousness. The resort to him was general. All men counted John as a prophet. They came to his baptism. But who was he? Elijah? That Prophet? The Christ?

Verses 16 and 17. Now John took no advantage of this general suspense, nor sought any glory which did not belong to him. Held thus in general high esteem, and even thought possibly to be the great Messiah, he did not form a party to raise him to power, or put himself at the head of multitudes who would have followed him, but, faithful to his office as the forerunner, JOHN ANSWERED UNTO ALL, whether they were priests and Levites sent from

headquarters (John i. 19) to ask him who he was, or his own disciples, jealous of their master's honor (John iii. 26, etc.), or the people in general musing in their hearts—to all he answered plainly who and what he was, assuming only a secondary place, ready to decrease before him whose way he came to prepare. I INDEED BAPTIZE YOU WITH WATER, and this is no unmeaning ceremony. It has significance and marks my mission (John i. 25). The Jews had been accustomed to a great many washings (baptisms) of various sorts; whether proselyte baptism had already been inaugurated is not certain; but the question asked in John i. 25 indicates the view they took of the rite of baptism. It was a consecrating ordinance, symbolical of cleansing, purification. The element used, water, was significant of this. John here indicates the baptism he administered to have been preparatory. ONE MIGHTIER THAN I. See this thought fully brought out in John i. 19-28, iii. 23-36. He disclaims being the expected one, though intimately related to his coming. COMETH. Even "standeth among you." So John preached, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." THE LATCHET, or strap, of WHOSE SHOES, sandals, (which then were worn in place of shoes,) I AM NOT WORTHY TO UNLOOSE. These sandals covered only the sole of the foot; no stockings were worn, and the thong (latchet) fastening the sandal on had often to be loosed, to allow the feet to be washed. This was a common act of hospitality on entering a house; hence the washing of feet is so often spoken of. Now to loose the sandals and set them to one side (Matt. iii. 11) was a very humble office of a servant; and John puts such a distance between himself and the Coming One whom he announced, as to say he was not even worthy to do so menial a service to so exalted a person. HE SHALL BAPTIZE YOU WITH THE HOLY GHOST AND WITH FIRE, with an agency that will not only *signify*, but *effect* cleansing. Jesus himself called this "power from on high." It was signally fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, after Christ's ascension. That was the

inauguration of the Christian church, and, in the exercise of the power thus conferred, the church has gone on executing the Christ's commission, "Go ye into all the world and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost." The Holy Ghost "was not yet given" till Jesus was glorified (John vii. 39), but when given he came to *abide* (John xiv. 16, 17), and he is present and given in those baptisms now administered in the church according to the divine ordinance and command quoted above. Fire signifies purification in like manner with water. WHOSE FAN (winnowing shovel) IS IN HIS HAND. The figure is taken from husbandry. The farmers were accustomed to throw up the trodden-out grain with the chaff against the wind, and it would blow the chaff away, whilst the grain would fall down again upon the threshing-floor, which was a level and hard beaten place in the field. HE WILL THOROUGHLY PURGE HIS FLOOR. Make clean work. For this he is ready. AND WILL GATHER THE WHEAT INTO HIS GARNER. This marks one character and destiny as over against another character and destiny, set forth in the next clause—BUT THE CHAFF HE WILL BURN WITH FIRE UNQUENCHABLE. Compare with this Matt. xiii. 1-30. The wheat are the precious fruits of his salvation work, the believing saved; the chaff may have been right next the wheat and have a protection to it while it was being perfected, yet at the harvest it shall perish; so the unbelieving, unsaved, shall be judged and cast out. The garner of the Lord is his church, first on earth, perfected in heaven; fire unquenchable is hell. This sifting process is a final one, yet in process of preparation. His fan is in his hand; "and the winnowing process goes on by means of his gracious and providential dealings with men, to be thoroughly done at the end of the world."

Verse 18. MANY OTHER THINGS IN HIS EXHORTATION. He was a mighty preacher of righteousness, and the character of his admonitions may be gathered from the former part of our chapter.

Faithfulness in Reproof.

Verses 19 and 20. In these verses Luke anticipates events, led thereto, it seems, by the previous account of John's preaching, these verses containing another instance of his unswerving fidelity, at whatever cost. TETRARCH signifies the ruler of a fourth part; it is a title of less dignity than that of king. This ruler is also known as Herod Antipas. He was son of Herod the Great. BEING REPROVED BY HIM. John was a reprovcr of sin, wherever found; like Him before whom he went, he was no respecter of persons; like Daniel and his Hebrew companions, he did not fear kings when they were in the wrong. FOR HERODIAS, HIS BROTHER'S WIFE, whom he married, although he had a wife, the daughter of Aretas, and she had a husband living. This Herod Philip was not "the tetrarch of Iturea," but an obscure man, living in private, disinherited by his father. We have before spoken of the unscrupulous vileness of the Herods in general. Antipas was no exception among them, and in addition to this open and shameless adultery was chargeable with many other EVILS, for which John faithfully reprovcd him. What if this did cost John his head at last (Matt. xiv. 1-12); he thereby gained the faithful martyr's crown.

Faithfulness to his Mission.

Verses 21 and 22. WHEN ALL THE PEOPLE WERE BAPTIZED. That is, in this period, when John's baptism was generally accepted, all the people resorting to it, as we learn from Matt. iii. 5-7 and elsewhere. It does not mean that everybody had been baptized first. IT CAME TO PASS THAT among the applicants for baptism was JESUS ALSO. A fuller account of his application is found in Matt. iii. 13-17. John had been "in the deserts," a recluse, "neither eating nor drinking" socially with men. Jesus had been in the carpenter-shop at Nazareth. Had they two ever met before? Their mothers were cousins, themselves were related to each other in office; but had they at all known each other by ordinary acquaintance before this? John says, (John i. 33), "I knew him not;" yet he had said, when Jesus came to him

at the Jordan, "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" We may raise questions here which are not easily answered, owing to our lack of data; so little is said. Many things that puzzle us now would be clear, if we knew all the facts and circumstances connected therewith. Things, however, left thus perplexing in the Scriptures, can hardly be of vital moment to us; and it is a standard rule that ignorance cannot make an objection. Why did Jesus come to John to be baptized by him? Not to confess sins of his own; for he had none. Not to profess repentance for himself; for he had nothing to repent of. He himself gave as a reason, "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matt. iii. 15). Jesus was to "bring in everlasting righteousness" (Dan. ix. 24). He was to be "of God made unto us righteousness" (1 Cor. i. 30). In making full, completing all righteousness, he must needs come under the law and fulfill the law, and this he did in all the relations of life into which he came, becoming "in all things like unto his brethren." He had been circumcised; now he came to be baptized by his fore-runner, and enter thereupon on his public ministry. BEING BAPTIZED. For John yielded. AND PRAYING. Luke, more than any other, tells us of Jesus praying. Doubtless from infancy he grew up in this sweet, safe habit, and hereby grew in wisdom and grace. Did Jesus pray? How much more do we need to be often so engaged! THE HEAVEN WAS OPENED. This was after he had gone up from the place of baptism, as Matthew and Mark both state. Compare Is. lxiv. 1; Ezek. i. 1; John i. 52; Acts vii. 56. What appearance was presented in the heavens to those who observed this phenomenon we are left to conjecture. The expression indicates the external physical reality of the occurrence, as also does what follows, and, indeed, the whole context. AND THE HOLY GHOST DESCENDED. All we know about the Holy Ghost we get from the Bible. There His divine personality is clearly declared, and He is spoken of in equal honor with the Father and the Son. IN A BODILY SHAPE. This is very explicit; not in

manner, but in a bodily shape, LIKE A DOVE. The Spirit acting in His divine sovereignty assumed this form. Both before and since, the dove represented purity, gentleness, and love. Who saw this form? John and Jesus. We do not know that there were any others present on this occasion. What was the object of it? So far as John is concerned, this is answered in his statement in John i. 33. It certified him that this was the Messiah. So far as Jesus is concerned, it was heaven's ratification of, and consecration to, his mission as the Christ, the Anointed. This testimony was followed by still more; for, A VOICE CAME FROM HEAVEN, an articulate, audible voice, and whose it was is manifest from what it said—THOU ART MY BELOVED SON, or *my Son, the beloved*, distinguished above the adopted sons who become such by the Only-begotten's gift. IN THEE I AM WELL PLEASED. There are but a few letters different, between the verb rendered *well pleased* here and the one rendered *good will* in the angel's song at the nativity. These are the same word radically; and it is the men who fall in with God's good pleasure, men who receive the beloved Son, who may count the *good tidings* theirs, and have *peace* even on earth! God has complacency in the Son of his love, and in as many, too, as receive him. (John i. 12, 13.) For "God so loved the world as to give His only-begotten Son" to save it; in this Son he was ever well pleased, and never more pleased (to speak after the manner of men) than when the Son came into the world saying, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O my God."

In this baptismal scene we have the three persons of the Holy Trinity, constituting the Godhead, distinctly set forth; and, comparing this place with Matt. xxviii. 19, we have this doctrine both at the beginning and at the close of our Lord's ministry, as a fundamental part of the system of Christianity. At the same time it is an unfathomable mystery.

Reflections.

1. An imitator of Jesus will be careful to observe the ordinances of the Church.

2. The mode of John's baptism is not stated in the Scripture accounts, and is no more important than the mode of the original institution of the Lord's Supper. But when sectarians declare that the word "baptize" *must* mean *dip* or *immerse*, they declare what all scholars know is not so; that it *may* mean "immerse" is readily acknowledged. In all probability Jesus and John, wearing sandals and no stockings, and the usual loose garments, stepped into the water, and then John poured the water of baptism on Jesus' head as he bowed forward. Thus all ancient pictorial representations give it, and *none* represent it by immersion. The Scriptures favor the *pouring* mode, in speaking of the Holy Spirit. See Prov. i. 23; Is. xlv. 3; Ezek. xxxix. 29; Joel ii. 28, 29; Acts i. 5, 8; ii. 17, 18; etc. And *sprinkling* for purification has much Scripture sanction. See Levit. xiv. 7, 16, 27, 51; xvi. 14, 15; Num. viii. 7; Is. lii. 15; Ezek. xxxvi. 25; Heb. xii. 24; 1 Pet. i. 2.

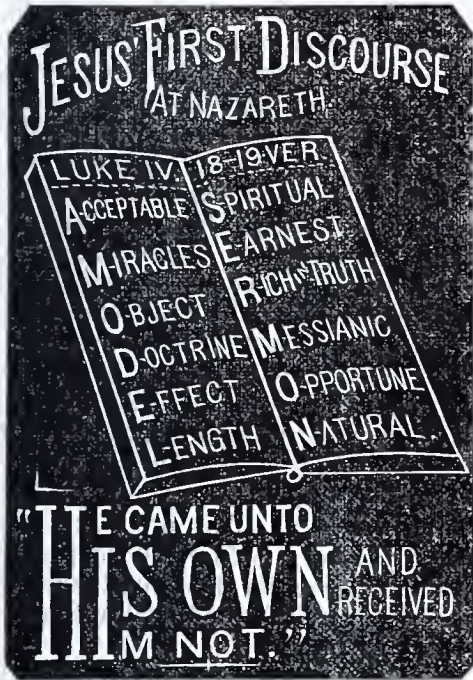
3. John's whole work, including his baptism, was preparatory. He was the forerunner of the Heavenly King, the Messiah, and when he had sufficiently pointed out "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," his work was done. See Luke vii. 24-30; John x. 40-42; Acts xix. 1-5.

YORK, PA.—The forty-ninth anniversary of Zion's Lutheran Sunday-school of York, Pa., took place on the 26th of May. The "harvest field" was represented by unthreshed sheaves of wheat arranged on the pulpit platform, together with pyramids of flowers and beautiful and emblematical designs. The pastor, Rev. A. W. Lilly, offered the opening prayer, and the superintendent, Mr. E. G. Smyser, addressed the school. The contributions for the year amounted to \$391.72. The whole number of officers, teachers and scholars is 434, with an average attendance of 285. The *True Democrat*, from which we have condensed this report, says: "The day throughout was a pleasant occasion for the people of Zion's Lutheran church and Sunday-school, and from this time begins the fiftieth year of their Sunday-school, one among the first established in York, and a notable fact is that its superintendent, Mr. E. G. Smyser, has been connected with it from the time of its organization, and to him belongs much credit for its success as a flourishing Sunday-school."

JESUS AT NAZARETH.

July 28.

Luke iv. 16-30



COMMENTS ON THE LESSON.

Some think the account given in Matt. xiii. 54-58 and Mark vi. 1-6, refers to a different and subsequent occasion to that in our lesson. Others think it altogether unlikely that a second scene of this nature, so much like the first, should occur in the same place, and, though there are difficulties in harmonizing the several accounts, yet think they all refer to one and the same occasion. We agree with the latter opinion. This preaching of Jesus at Nazareth seems to have occurred toward the close of the first year of our Lord's public ministry, reckoning from his baptism. Jesus had been to Jerusalem to the Passover in the spring, and remained in Judea a considerable time, as indicated in John iv. 1-3, making disciples. Meanwhile John the Baptist was cast into prison, and the Pharisees began to look with envious eye on Jesus' work. So he left Judea for Galilee, and on his way thither, passing through Samaria, the interesting events of John iv. occurred. Arrived in Galilee he began to teach in its cities and villages, and at length came to the place where he had spent most of his years on earth. He came to his own, brothers, sisters, neighbors,

acquaintances, former playmates and work-fellows. Now his fame had spread abroad from Judea up to Galilee, and from other towns to Nazareth; and we may well believe there was a great deal of curiosity to see and hear this townsman who had gone out of Nazareth a carpenter, and come back to it, in a short while, a famous man, preacher, and doer of wonderful works. And, no doubt, besides the curiosity there was considerable envy and jealousy and mean talk. We know how it is now, and human nature has not changed.

His Preaching.

Verse 16. AND HE CAME TO NAZARETH, WHERE HE HAD BEEN BROUGHT UP, where he had spent nearly thirty years. He had been gone not more than a year; he must have been well known and not forgotten in the community; but he came back in a new *role*, as we would say. From quiet comparative seclusion he had become a public teacher, a person of mark. AND, AS HIS CUSTOM WAS, all the while he lived there, and wherever he went, HE WENT INTO THE SYNAGOGUE ON THE SABBATH DAY. The synagogue was the place of the Jews' religious assembly. Every considerable town where there were Jews had at least one; Jerusalem is said to have had even as many as 460 to 480 of these places for worship. They appear to have arisen after the captivity; it will be remembered that in Jehoshaphat's reforming work, the teachers had to carry the book of the law with them; in these later days one could have been found in each of the many synagogues. Farrar, in describing one of these, says, "On entering there were seats on one side for the men; on the other, behind a lattice, were seated the women, shrouded in their long veils. At one end was the *tebhah*, or ark of painted wood, which contained the sacred scriptures; and at one side was the *bima*, or elevated seat, for the reader or preacher. Clergy, properly speaking, there were none; but in the chief seats were the ten or more *batlanim*, "men of leisure," or leading elders; and pre-eminent among these the chief of the synagogue (Mark v. 22). Inferior in rank to these were the *chaz-zan*, or clerk, whose duty it was to keep

the sacred books; the *sheliach*, corresponding to our sacristan or verger (sexton); and the *parnasim*, or shepherds, who in some respects acted as deacons. The service of the synagogue was not unlike our own (that of the Church of England). After the prayers two lessons were always read, one from the Law, and one from the Prophets; and as there were no ordained ministers to conduct the services—for the office of priests and Levites at Jerusalem was wholly different—these lessons might not only be read by any competent person who received permission from the chief or ruler of the synagogue, but he was even at liberty to add his own comment." Dr. Ginsburg says, "Their 'chief seats' (Mark xii. 39) were placed in front of the ark, and facing the congregation. In the synagogue at Alexandria were seventy-one golden arm chairs, or seats of honor, for doctors and honorable men." STOOD UP FOR TO READ. Took his place at the bema or rostrum. This, most likely, he had never done before in Nazareth.

Verse 17. THERE WAS DELIVERED UNTO HIM by the ruler of the synagogue, who thereby recognized his right to take that position, THE BOOK (it was a parchment roll, of course) OF THE PROPHET ESAIAS (Isaiah). The first lesson and prayers had already been read. OPENED. Unrolled. HE FOUND THE PLACE (whether it was the appointed lesson for the day, or another, does not appear; an alternative lesson from the Prophets was allowed, but from the Law the regular lesson must always be read.) WHERE IT WAS WRITTEN. Behold, he who was the living Word himself took a text from the written word, thus honoring it as he did in the conflict with Satan. It was written, likely, in Hebrew. It is quoted however by Luke from the Septuagint, (Greek) version. We find this very frequently done by the New Testament writers.

Verses 18 and 19. This passage is taken from Is. lxi. 1, 2, and one clause of it from lviii. 6; and we have here "not so much the letter as the main thought of the text of this sermon" (Van Oosterzee). Alford says: "The meaning of this prophetic citation may

be better seen, when we remember that it stands in the middle of the third great division of the book of Isaiah, that, viz., which comprises the prophecies of the person, office, sufferings, triumph, and church of the Messiah; and thus by implication announces the *fulfilment of all that went before* in him who then addressed them." The whole of this quotation speaks of deliverance, ransom, salvation to those who were stricken with all manner of need. It is noticeable that the Lord ended his quotation without the clause concerning "the day of vengeance" (Is. lxi. 2), as though he would leave the merciful announcement of THE ACCEPTABLE YEAR OF THE LORD, the day of grace, the Jubilee of deliverance, as a winning sound upon their ears. This prophecy was uttered 700 years before, by the prophet Isaiah, to have its first fulfilment in himself, but its chief and final fulfilment in the Messiah.

Verse 20. CLOSED THE BOOK. Though he had not read as much as he might have, 21 verses being the full extent of a prophetic lesson. THE MINISTER. Attendant officer of the synagogue. SAT DOWN. Taking the usual posture of an instructor. The people were accustomed to stand too, when the Scriptures were read. THE EYES OF ALL . . . WERE FASTENED ON HIM. Riveted attention; great expectation; the scene is vividly portrayed, and can readily be set before our imagination.

Verse 21. BEGAN TO SAY. These words indicate that he made an address the subject of which only is here given, and not a full report.

The following words were merely his *opening* sentence. He said much more, to the same effect, showing that THIS DAY IS THIS SCRIPTURE FULFILLED IN YOUR EARS, here to you by me. He thus proclaims himself the Spirit-anointed Redeemer of men from their lost condition.

Its Effect.

Verse 22. ALL BARE HIM WITNESS. It was customary in the synagogue to give full vent to their feelings, and, in one way and another, the people expressed their good opinion of the address. At the same time they WONDERED that this man, who had never been to any high

school of learning, could speak so well, had such a command of language and was so graceful in his address. For the context leads us to suppose that GRACIOUS WORDS refers more to the form than the substance of his remarks. Perhaps, however, before they appreciated the full force of his words, they assented to them. "But as He proceeded," says Farrar, "He became conscious of a change. The spell of His wisdom and sweetness was broken, as these rude and violent Nazarenes began to realize the full meaning of His divine claims. It was customary with the Jews in the worship of their synagogue to give full vent to their feelings, and it was not long before Jesus became sensible of indignant and rebellious murmurs. He saw that those glittering eyes, which had been fixed upon Him in the first excitement of attention, were beginning to glow with the malignant light of jealousy and hatred." They began to say to one another, IS NOT THIS JOSEPH'S SON? What pretensions are these which such as he is making? We know all about him; he has lived here all his life!

Verse 23. Perceiving their envy, jealousy and pride asserting themselves, he took note of it by saying, YE WILL SURELY SAY UNTO ME, use in my case, THIS PROVERB, PHYSICIAN, HEAL THYSELF. You are our townsman, we know you well, and you will have to *prove* yourself better than we are before you can undertake to help us! The proverbial form is amplified and explained by what follows: WHATSOEVER WE HAVE HEARD DONE IN CAPERNAUM, such as the instantaneous and complete healing of the nobleman's son, who was at the point of death (John iv. 46-54), and other miracles, DO ALSO HERE IN THY COUNTRY. Give us evidence of what you can do. Help your own people. Let us see for ourselves; for seeing is believing. Why, at any rate, do you honor others above your own country by showing your wonders there and not among us? The craving for miracles, signs and wonders, is never satisfied, always cries, *Give, give; more, yet more!*

Verse 24. VERILY. How true it must be, thus attested! No PROPHET

IS ACCEPTED IN HIS OWN COUNTRY. Experience and observation show this, as a rule, to hold good; this does not show, however, that it *ought* to be so. It is owing to the feebleness, envy, jealousy, pride and general depravity, of our poor human nature. *Prejudices are stronger than convictions.* Henry says: "Familiarity breeds contempt; and we are apt to think meanly of those whose conversation we have been accustomed to; and they will scarcely be duly honored as *prophets*, who were well known when they were in the rank of *private men*. That is most esteemed that is *far-fetched* and *dear-bought*, above what is *home-bred*, though really more excellent. This arises likewise from the envy which neighbors commonly have towards one another, so that they cannot endure to see him their *superior*, whom a while ago they took to be every way their *inferior*. For this reason, Christ declined working miracles, or doing anything extraordinary at Nazareth, because of the rooted prejudices they had against him there."

Verses 25 to 27. In these verses Jesus gives two historical illustrations, very notable in themselves, of the truth that geographical contiguity and external physical relationships constitute no claim upon the ministers of God's economy, nor justify expectation of special privileges. ISRAEL was the chosen people, and the nation of ELIAS (Elijah), the great prophet; yet, though there were MANY WIDOWS among them in that day, UNTO NONE OF THEM WAS ELIJAH SENT. God in his sovereignty, however, and knowing who was prepared to receive and appreciate his prophet, did send him and the blessings accompanying him to A WOMAN OF SIDON, a widow of heathen extraction. So, in ELISEUS' (Elisha's) day, none of the lepers of Israel were cleansed, but NAAMAN, THE SYRIAN, was made whole because he believed and obeyed. Opportunities increase responsibility, but do not of themselves confer benefit. They must be embraced. To be townsmen of Jesus will be of no avail, if we be without faith in Jesus. Opportunity must find receptivity. "It would be most unjust," well says Van Oosterzee (in Lange),

“to accuse this turn which the Saviour gave his discourse, of excessive harshness, since we must not forget that an unloving judgment (vs. 22, 23) respecting his person and his work had preceded it, and how here everything depends on the tone and the voice of the speaker. Moreover, since Luke communicates to us only the main substance of the whole address, we must be very careful of rendering here a precipitate judgment. We have rather here to admire the wise Physician, who does not shrink from heroic methods in order to attack the very heart of the chief moral disease of his contemporaries, namely, sensuousness and earthly-minded expectations, and who will rather set at stake his own safety than spare their perverseness. And ought not he who had spent so many years of retirement at Nazareth, and had carefully observed the moral condition of its inhabitants, to have been better able to judge how sternly and severely he was obliged to rebuke, than modern criticism, which here also is very far from being without presuppositions!”

Verses 28 and 29. FILLED WITH WRATH at the pointed application of the subject. “Gracious words,” when they come too close to home, are apt to be received ungraciously. Eager for miracles and honor to themselves, they could not brook this plain warning of their danger as unbelievers. They ROSE UP in fury, brought the meeting to a riotous close, THRUST HIM OUT OF THE CITY, whose limits were soon reached. THE BROW OF THE HILL just outside of the city can still be seen. Steeps forty to fifty feet deep are there. They proposed to CAST HIM DOWN HEADLONG! Why, what had he done? Here we see the character of his fellow-citizens. They were murderers in their hearts.

Verse 30. BUT HE, maintaining his dignity and composure, by his very bearing overawed them, (perhaps reaction from their own ungoverned violence had already set in,) PASSING THROUGH THE MIDST OF THEM, openly, not necessarily miraculously, WENT HIS WAY, and, if our supposition made above is correct, he never preached at

Nazareth again. “He came unto his own, and his own received him not.” His first public rejection was at his own home, Nazareth—a foretaste of his life of suffering, “rejected of men.” Thereafter he fixed his abode at Capernaum. On this escape out of their hands compare John viii. 59; x. 39; vii. 44-46; xviii. 4-6.

Reflections.

1. Jesus never was a “Boy Preacher,” but waited till he was thirty years old and prepared for His public ministry before He entered upon it. Here is a lesson for many who are disposed to run before they are sent, and before they are qualified.

2. Jesus took a text, and stuck to it. Unlike Him, there are a good many nowadays who try to show a certain smartness in which they pride themselves, by making very little of text (if they take any) or the Scriptures.

3. In the synagogue there were no regular clergy, but there was a “ruler” who allowed those whom he thought competent to read and comment upon the Scriptures appointed to be read. There are clergy nowadays, and the need of venturing on chance persons, who may be present, to edify the people, does not exist in many places.

4. THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE HATH ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. The biographer of Mr. Eliot, the missionary, says of him: “He liked no preaching but what had been well studied; and he would very much commend a sermon which he could perceive had required some good thinking and reading in the author of it. I have heard him thus express himself; ‘Brother, there was oil required for the service of the sanctuary, but it was to be beaten oil. I praise God I saw your oil so well beaten to-day. The Lord help us always, by good study, to beat our oil, that there may be no knots in our sermons left undissolved, and that there may be a clear light thereby given to the house of God!’ He likewise looked for something in a sermon beside and beyond the mere study of man; he was for having the Spirit of God breathing in it and with it; and he was for speaking those things, from those impressions,

and with those affections, which might compel the hearer to say, 'The Spirit of God is here!' I have heard him complain, 'It is a sad thing, when a sermon shall have this one thing, the Spirit of God, wanting in it.'"—*Anecdotes on the New Testament. (In Peloubet.)*

5. NO PROPHET IS ACCEPTED IN HIS OWN COUNTRY. The proverb says truly that no man is a hero to his own servant. Not because he is not really a hero, but because heroism is an invisible spirit; and when its symbols and pageantries are laid aside, it seems as if heroism were laid aside with them. When a hero or a saint is seen to eat and drink, live and dress, like an ordinary man, weak where some are strong, ignorant of some things that others know, it is almost impossible to look through these things and recognize the hero or saint. So even Cassius spoke of the immortal Cæsar, and misunderstood where his greatness lay (*Julius Cæsar*, Act I. Scene 2). Were Socrates to walk our streets as he walked those of Athens, with "his thick lips, snub nose, corpulent body, and personal ugliness," scolded by his wife at home, and walking in mean dress and bare feet in the public streets and workshops, "careless where, or when, or with whom he

talked," how many of us would have recognized under this Thersites' mask the features of a god, or have imagined that this man, among the millions of his age, would march down the centuries the foremost man of all? No man in a cloud ever comprehended the cloud. Put it far away in the sunset sky, then you can see the cloud. Stand close against a mountain; you see stones, and bushes, and trees, and soil, and rocks, but you cannot see the mountain. Stand off, off in the distance; there alone can you see the mountain. We are apt to think, if we had lived with Jesus in his earthly life, and heard his gracious words, and seen his miracles of love, we should not have failed to recognize him, as his townsmen did. But we have altogether the advantage over them. With Jesus not on the cross, but the Lamb in the midst of the throne; not in common raiment, but "with his hair as white as snow, and his eyes a flame of fire, and his voice as the sound of many waters," and on his vesture written, "King of kings and Lord of lords,"—it is much easier for us to trust him as our divine Saviour, to be loyal to him as our King, and proclaim him as the Redeemer of the world.—*From Peloubet.*

Infant Department.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS.

BY PROF. E. S. BREIDENBAUGH, M. A.

DEAR TEACHERS: We begin again a course of lessons on that old, old story of Jesus and his precious love. We have trying to learn from the Bible accounts of the worthies of old how to live, but now we learn from the great example of him who did no sin. We pray the Teacher to so rule our hearts that we teach in love, trust, and success.

Yours in truth, B.

Birth of Christ the Lord.

July 7.

Luke ii. 8-20.

In the number of the AUGSBURG

TEACHER for December, 1877, are found suggestions for the treatment of this topic.

In addition I would suggest that it is well to dwell particularly on the verse which furnishes the Golden Text, (11.) that verse which speaks of Christ as the Lord—the ruler of our hearts as well as all of our affairs. Show that we need a ruler; illustrate by the ship on which there is no commander—the sailors do not know what to do—whither to steer the ship; describe the condition of such a ship along a rocky coast—danger besetting the ship and its precious freight and more precious passengers on every side; describe the beating of the waves, the rolling of

the ship, the bursting of the sails—and no one to direct the men, who are strong but ignorant.

So men have power to do work—by lips and hands; they have eyes and ears to learn, and feet to walk; have passions and desires of the heart; have loves and hates. They wish to learn to work, but their hearts are evil; they have the bad ruler of sin. Show how the ship would be served if the captain on board should wish to destroy it. So Satan by his evil in our hearts wishes to destroy us. Our eyes see and our ears listen to and our minds think evil, our feet lead us among wicked men, our hands will do wicked deeds and our lips speak inful words. We love sin, and hate what is good; we allow anger, and lust, and other evils, to lead us to do harm to our friends.

But if the ship has a good captain, the sailors know what to do, the ship escapes the rocks, and passengers and freight are saved. So if Jesus rules our hearts we love what is right and hate sin, we do not love anger and deceit, we use our eyes and ears to learn about God and his love. We walk with good company, and do kindness to our neighbor, and speak kind words.

Thanksgiving should fill our hearts that God has given a Christ, the Lord, the ruler of our hearts, and eyes, and hands, and lips—who helps us and tells us what is right and what is wrong.

Having this ruler, the bird's nest will not be torn down; the fruit will remain on the tree as far as our hands are concerned, until permission be given to remove it; the cat will not be stoned; the angry words and untruths will not be said; we will not tease and ridicule, but give help and love to others.

We will play more heartily and have no quarrels; we will work without grumbling.

Thus the teacher can impress the fact that the rule of Jesus in the heart is a necessity to right living.

Well it is, therefore, to rejoice with the shepherds and the angels, at the announcement by the herald angels of the birth of Christ the Lord. Repeat
V. II.

The Child Jesus.

July 14.

Luke ii. 40-52.

Review by asking questions with reference to the contrast given in the lesson, and ask the children to tell you the difference between the efforts by Satan and Jesus in the heart.

The children might in the beginning of this lesson be asked, What is an altar? what do we mean by feasting? why we feast? Illustrate by July 4, which has just been celebrated. We rejoice that our country began to exist 102 years ago as independent from foreign oppression. Show how the Jews had occasion to rejoice that they had escaped so great a sorrow as the death of the first-born in every family. Dwell somewhat on this providential act of Divine love. The Jews celebrated this event with great rejoicing. Describe the manner of celebration (Exodus xii., xiii.)

(Draw on the board a map of Judea, giving Nazareth, Jerusalem, temple.)

Jesus, when only twelve years of age, was taken by his parents. Describe the great crowd—the men, women and lads—Jesus in the midst, known as a very good, amiable boy. Some persons rode, many on foot, carrying their luggage; many slept in tents; the whole was a grand time for rejoicing. The crowd reach the city. Describe the crowd from every nation; many languages are spoken. The temple must have been a place of great attraction, and no doubt Jesus was often there, gazing upon its beauty and grandeur of gold and silver and fine hangings. After ten days had been spent as already described (Ex. xii.), the crowd rapidly dispersed. Harvest time was near at hand. Describe the scenes with reference to the discovery of the absence of Jesus; the anxious inquiries made by Joseph and Mary, of the various groups of people as they passed back along the crowds in their search. Describe the search for a lost child in the city; the telegraph to the police, the sending out of a bell-man, the fear of the parents lest harm had happened to a dear one. No doubt in Jerusalem the officers in the city were sent to search; but the parents searched also, and went to the temple, as no doubt Jesus had often

spoken of the temple and its wonders. Great was the astonishment of his parents in finding Jesus giving as well as seeming to receive instruction from the men with whom he was found. These men, who had thought themselves so learned, must also have wondered who the lad could be.

Although Jesus rebuked the thought which Mary seems to have had that Jesus was disobedient, he immediately left the company and went home with his parents.

This incident teaches us children should obey parents in all things—unless parents should command sin, which parents rarely do. True love for and service to God is shown by such prompt obedience. If a boy should pray all day and forget to do his work, or a girl should read the Bible all day and neglect her work, she would not be obeying God; although we ought to read the Bible often and pray much. We ought to do as Jesus did, put in practice what we know to be right. Jesus thus taught these wise men a lesson. They talked much about God and obedience, but neglected in many ways to obey him. Jesus talked and worked—hence as he grew older he grew wiser and better—and was more and more loved by God as well as men.

Repeat Golden Text, v. 52.

Those who follow the example of Jesus can have the same said of them.

Ministry of John the Baptist.

July 21.

Luke iii. 1-22.

In review dwell specially on the lessons taught from the example of Jesus.

In teaching this lesson it will be well to first speak of the office of a herald, or messenger. Show that Jesus was preceded by John—his relative—as his last herald; show that many others had preceded. Show that he was called The Baptist because he baptized the people, as well as preached; he baptized them as evidence on their part of their intention to return from sinful to godly lives.

Vs. 4-6. Not roads, but hearts; heralds prepared the roads, and disposed the people to kind offices. John taught the people that they were sin-

ners, and endeavored to make their hearts ready for Jesus.

Vs. 7-8. John is not afraid to rebuke sin, and shows the way out from it; he taught the gospel of which the angels sang *good-will*, that golden commandment of doing to others as we would be done by.

Being descendants of Abraham cannot save, but being believers and obeyers of God as Abraham was will bring favor from God.

V. 9. By fruits, trees are known. So men by what they do.

Explain the illustrations given in verses 10-14.

The contrast between the teaching and power of John and Jesus, as given in verses 15-17, is true to-day in a more marked manner. Men can but teach of Jesus—the power of changing hearts and punishing sin belongs to God alone.

Vs. 19-20 are explained in Matthew xiv. 1-13.

Vs. 21-22. The preaching of John and his teaching, as well as the character of Jesus, were thus specially recognized.

The fearless teaching of John should teach us to be willing to reform all who sin; to endeavor to lead them to better lives. But we must remember that change of heart comes only through Jesus. The character of John is given in the words of the angels, whose visit to Zacharias is described Luke i. 5-25. Repeat Golden Text.—HE SHALL BE GREAT IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD, AND SHALL DRINK NEITHER WINE NOR STRONG DRINK—i. 15.

Jesus at Nazareth.

July 28.

Luke iv. 14-30.

In review give special prominence to the fact that all power in preaching and teaching is from God—man alone is helpless.

In the lesson for this Sabbath, you can teach several lessons.

I. We find in verse 18 a text for a lesson, and I suggest that teachers dwell on this theme; and the Sabbath before this lesson is taught, teach this verse to the children, and ask them to find out how many cases are mentioned in the gospels of Jesus healing the sick, making the blind to see, the lame to

walk, the deaf to hear; how often devils were cast out, thus setting persons free from the domain of evil. Also ask for examples of his preaching.

Then, asking the children for their answers, place the instances on the board. You can then illustrate the force of the Golden Text. v. 32.

II. This paragraph also teaches that these citizens of Nazareth did not properly appreciate the teaching of Jesus. But the result of their attempt to kill Jesus shows that men cannot

destroy the truth, which will be constantly preached to them. Also, all power belongs to God. These people thought that Joseph's son, the carpenter lad, was not worthy of being listened to.

III. Verse 16, we learn that Jesus never omitted an opportunity of doing a good deed. Do not plead business, sickness, as a mere excuse. Everywhere, in all things, we can serve the Lord. No occupation should engage our time unless we can in it serve Jesus.

Gleanings from the Great Field.

NEWS AND NOTES.

BY REV. S. B. BARNITZ.

ST. MATTHEW'S, PHILADELPHIA.—The Sunday-school of this church celebrated its anniversary on Thursday evening, May 23, in a beautiful and successful manner. We have waited to the last minute for a more extended notice from somebody who was present, but as it has not come, can only say what we know certainly, and that is, it was a success, as St. Matthew's undertakings always are.

THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION AT ATLANTA.—The report of this great gathering is already published, and is a splendid achievement of the stenographic and printing arts. It is a verbatim report, and bears the stamp of the accuracy for which our good brother, I. Newton Baker, is noted. This report ought to be in the hands of every Sunday-school worker in our Church. Price, twenty-five cents, for which sum it will be sent either from the Lutheran Publication House, Philadelphia, or from Rev. S. B. Barnitz, Wheeling, W. Va.

THE MEMORIAL SUNDAY-SCHOOL, WASHINGTON, D. C.—It was our privilege recently to look in on this school, at one of its beautiful special entertainments. The large church was full of happy children and their friends, and the school showed evidences of growth and prosperity. There is promise in it for the future of the Memorial. As we looked over that assembly and walked about our Memorial Zion, telling the towers thereof, we could not but longingly wish that the Church was aroused to a true sense of her grand opportunities in the national capital. *Help the Memorial!*

NATIONAL LUTHERAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL CONVENTION.—We were just about to submit the call for this important gathering to the Executive Committee, subsequent to its publication, when a card from Rev. D. L. Ryder, of Hollidaysburg, Pa., informed us that the plan

of holding the convention in that city must be abandoned, because of incompleted repairs to the church of which he is pastor. The question now is, *Where shall the convention be held?* What community wants the blessings which flow from such a gathering? Of which of our churches shall it be said, "*Given to hospitality?*" ANSWER. S. B. B.

IOWA CITY LUTHERAN MISSION SABBATH-SCHOOL.—A "Jug Concert" was held by this school on Friday evening, May 10, and was successful. About \$6 had been laid out for jugs, advertising, etc.; and the receipts on the evening of the concert were \$60. A programme of songs, speeches, recitations, etc., had been prepared, which furnished an hour and a half's pleasant entertainment. Twenty jugs had been distributed about three months before. The *fattest* one contained over \$13, which had been in the hands of a family composed of but two persons, and who live on day's wages. It is a good plan, and carried out as easily as any.

D. G.

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY-SCHOOL COMMITTEE.—Committee met May 22. Mr. Harris was chosen Secretary. The treasurer reported to date. Order was taken as to reports, to be sent only on payment or responsible pledge, and one for each fifty cents of quota paid. The chairman and secretary were directed to prepare a circular to publishing houses in regard to expenses of International Lesson Committee.

The Committee on Finance, as appointed, consists of Messrs. Harris, Phipps and Savage. Mr. Stout called attention to the need of *organization* of the International Sunday-school Association. Members of the Executive Committee were requested to suggest, at the next meeting, Articles of Association, for adoption at Toronto. Adjourned, to meet at the call of the secretary, during absence of chairman in Europe.

WM. HARRIS, Secy.

(For additional News and Notes see page 223.)

2d Quarter.

AUGSBURG LESSON LEAF. July 7, 1878.

Lesson XXVII.

International Bible Lessons.

LUKE ii. 8-20.

BIRTH OF CHRIST THE LORD.

8. And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

9. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid.

10. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

11. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

12. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

13. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

14. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

15. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

16. And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

17. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

18. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

19. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

20. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

CENTRAL TEXT.—Verses 10 and 11. Commit to memory.

LESSON TAUGHT.—The gospel centres in the person of Christ.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”—Verse 11.

SCRIPTURE READINGS.

M. John i. 1-18.
T. Luke i. 26-38.
W. Matt i. 18-25.
Th. Luke ii. 1-20.
F. Phil. ii. 3-11.
Sat. Heb. i.
S. Heb. ii.

BRIEF NOTES.—“In the same country”—in Judea, near Bethlehem. It was not *the* angel of the Lord, but *an* angel, &c. “The glory of the Lord” had appeared in the Shechinah of the Old Testament, leading Israel and appearing above the Mercy Seat. “Good tidings” is rendered by the word *gospel* in English, and *evangel* is a short form of the word in the Greek, Latin and German languages.

“To all the people” is an exact reading, meaning Israel first, and all other people through them, get the glad tidings. “Swaddling clothes,” the usual wrappings of a babe. “Manger”—trough or crib out of which cattle were wont to eat. The angels’ song is amplified and perpetuated in the *Gloria in Excelsis* of our church service. It has been used in the church for more than 1500 years. “Abroad”—to those who were gathered thereabouts. “Pondered”—weighed, meditated on. Christ’s birth occurred four years earlier than the period designated A. D. This year is really A. D. 1882.

Explanatory Questions.

ANNOUNCED BY ANGELS.

1. What scene is set before us in verse 8?
2. What visitor came to these shepherds?
3. At the same time what appeared about them? How were they affected?
4. What did the heavenly visitor say?
5. What one word in English means “good tidings?”
6. What effect were these tidings calculated to produce? Why?
7. What is the place called where he was reported to have been born? Why?
8. How did Jesus come to be born in Bethlehem?
9. What is the meaning of “Christ?” Of “Lord?” Of “Saviour?”
10. What sign did the angel mention by which they would know the child?
11. After the angel had made his announcement, what suddenly occurred?
12. Analyze and explain the angels’ song.

13. What church song has arisen out of it, and been used from earliest times?

VERIFIED BY SHEPHERDS.

14. After the angels had gone, what proposal did the shepherds make to one another?
15. What did they do and find? What did they tell?
16. How were the bearers of these things affected? What was there calculated to produce wonder?
17. How was Mary affected? What that previously occurred had she reason to think of along with these things?
18. What is said of the shepherds’ departure?
19. What contrasts can you see in the circumstances attending this child’s birth?
20. What is said of it in the Creed? What, in Gal. iv. 4? In John i. 14? In Phil. ii. 5-7? In Is. vii. 14 and ix. 6?
21. Is it anything to you that such a child was born? What?

HYMN. L. M.

Hosanna to the royal Son
Of David’s ancient line,
His natures two, His person one,
Mysterious and divine.

The root of David here we find,
And offspring is the same;
Eternity and time are joined
In our Immanuel’s name.

Blest He that comes to wretched men
With peaceful news from heaven;
Hosannas of the highest strain
To Christ the Lord be given.

Let mortals ne’er refuse to take
Th’ hosanna on their tongues,
Lest rocks and stones should rise, and break
Their silence into songs.

3d Quarter.

AUGSBURG LESSON LEAF. July 14, 1878.

Lesson XXVIII.

International Bible Lessons.

LUKE ii. 40-52.

THE CHILDHOOD OF JESUS.

40. And the child grew and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him.

41. Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.

42. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem, after the custom of the feast.

43. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.

44. But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance.

45. And when they found him not they returned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.

46. And it came to pass that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the

midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions.

47. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

48. And when they saw him, they were amazed; and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

49. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my father's business?

50. And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

51. And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them; but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

52. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.

CENTRAL TEXT.—Verses 40 and 52. Commit to memory.

LESSON TAUGHT.—Obedience to parents and to our Father in heaven.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." Verse 52.

SCRIPTURE READINGS.

M. Luke ii. 21-28.

T. Matt. ii. 1-12.

W. Matt. ii. 13-18.

Th. Matt. ii. 19-23.

F. Luke ii. 29-52.

Sat. John v. 17-23, 30-38.

S. 1 John v. 1-21.

BRIEF NOTES.—"The child grew" both in age and in wisdom, and in this was like other children. "The grace of God" which "was upon him" he yielded to and in no wise resisted. He *knew no sin*, and herein differed from other children. "The Feast of the Passover" occurred in our spring-time (Easter) and was one of the three annual occasions on which the males of Israel were

expected to appear at Jerusalem. "Twelve years old" was a crisis period in a Jewish boy's history; he then passed out of the class of little ones, and must begin to learn a trade. "In the temple"—that is, one of its cloisters. By "thy father" Mary meant Joseph, but by "my Father" Jesus meant God. "Subject unto them," teaching all men filial obedience. Here he became "*the carpenter*," working at Joseph's trade.

Explanatory Questions.

GROWING IN YEARS AND GRACE.

1. In what was Jesus' childhood like that of all children?
2. This shows he possessed what virtue? Give some other proofs of this.
3. For what was he distinguished as he grew up?
4. Of what child in the Old Testament is something similar said? 1 Sam. ii. 26. Of what one in the New? Luke i. 80. Compare Jer i. 5, and 2 Tim. iii. 15.
5. Why does not every child that grows in years grow in grace?

GROWING IN CONSCIOUSNESS.

6. What custom of Jesus' parents is spoken of? What did this show them to be?
7. How old was he at the time of the Passover mentioned in the lesson?
8. What can you tell about this period in the life of a Jewish boy?
9. When Mary and Joseph started home what did Jesus do?
10. How came it that they didn't know it? When did they miss him?
11. Where did they first look for the boy? Not finding him there, what did they do?

12. When did they find him? Where? Doing what? Explain.
13. What is said of the feelings of that learned company? Verse 47. Compare 40.
14. How did his parents feel at seeing him there? Why?
15. Which of them spoke to him? What did she say?
16. What was his answer? Did they understand him?
17. What did he mean? Who was his Father? iii. 22 and John ii. 16, etc.
18. What did this reply show concerning his own consciousness?

OBEDIENCE.

19. Notwithstanding his divine consciousness, what did he do?
20. How did he conduct himself toward his mother and Joseph?
21. In what does it appear that he was occupied at Nazareth? See Mark vi. 3.
22. How is Jesus our example in his life at Nazareth?
23. What is said of his mother? Of his further progress?

HYMN. C. M.

High let us swell our tuneful notes
And join th' angelic throng;
For angels no such love have known
T' awake a cheerful song.

Good will to guilty men is shown,
And peace on earth is given;
For lo! the incarnate Saviour comes,
A messenger from heaven.

Justice and grace with sweet accord
His rising beams adorn
Let heaven and earth in concert join,
Now such a Child is born.

Glory to God in highest strains,
In highest worlds be paid!
His glory by our lips proclaimed,
And by our lives displayed.

3d Quarter.

AUGSBURG LESSON LEAF. July 21, 1878.

Lesson XXIX.

International Bible Lessons.

LUKE iii. 15-22.

MINISTRY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

15. And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not,

16. John answered, saying unto them: all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:

17. Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner: but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.

18. And many other things, in his exhortation, preached he unto the people.

19. But Herod the tetrarch, being reproved by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done,

20. Added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison.

21. Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,

22. And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

CENTRAL TEXT.—Verses 16 and 17. Commit to memory.

LESSON TAUGHT.—Faithfulness.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink.” Luke i. 15.

SCRIPTURE READINGS.

M. Luke iii. 1-22.
T. Matt. iii. 1-17.
W. Matt. i. 1-11.
Th. John i. 19-31.
F. John i. 35-43.
Sat. Is. xl. 3-11; Mal. iii. 1, iv. 5, 6.
S. Matt. xi. 7-19; Acts xix. 1-5.

BRIEF NOTES.—“In expectation”—the Jews had been looking for the Messiah, and neighboring people knew they had such expectation. “Mused”—reasoned, debated. “The Christ”—A Greek form of the *Messiah* (Hebrew). John's character and public office as *the Baptist*, led men to wonder whether possibly he was the Christ. Most likely they would have accepted him as such if he

would have fallen in with their notions. But he proved stronger than to fall by such temptations. “The latchet” or hind string. “Shoes”—sandals. “With the Holy Ghost and with fire”—fulfilled and inaugurated on Pentecost after the Ascension. Verse 17 has an illustration from farmer life, the winnowing of the chaff from the wheat, to illustrate judgment, and separation of the good from the evil. “Tetrarch”—title of the ruler of Galilee. The “prison” was Machaerus, east of the Dead Sea. So Josephus tells us. “In a bodily shape”—assumed, it seems, for our greater assurance of the personality of the Holy Ghost. In this scene we have all the persons, or distinctions, of the Holy Trinity set forth.

Explanatory Questions.

FAITHFULNESS IN OFFICE.

1. What is said of the condition of the people? What was this “expectation”?
2. To whom were their thoughts now specially directed? Why?
3. What temptation was thus put before John?
4. What was John's testimony, and to whom made? How did this show faithfulness?
5. What was John's official relation to Jesus? John i. 23, iii. 28, 29; Matt. xi. 14.
6. What distinction did John make between the baptism he administered and that which Jesus would inaugurate? Compare Acts xix. 4.
7. When did this baptism with the Holy Ghost and with fire begin?
8. What process is represented in verse 17, and to whom ascribed? Explain.

FAITHFULNESS IN REPROOF.

9. What great man came under John's reproof? For what?
10. Tell something about this ruler, and his life, and his connection with John.

11. What did Herod do to John? How did this imprisonment end? Matt. xiv. 10.
12. Previous to his imprisonment, in what was John engaged? Who came to him? How did he receive and treat them? Luke iii. 2-14.

FAITHFULNESS TO HIS MISSION.

13. Who is specially mentioned as having come to John to be baptized?
14. Why should Jesus be baptized by John? Compare Matt. iii. 14, 15.
15. How was he engaged just afterward? What then occurred?
16. In this scene how many persons were represented?
17. Who were they, and how was each one represented?
18. What doctrine does this scene establish?
19. What testimony was here given to Jesus?
20. How old was Jesus at the time of his baptism?
21. What may his baptism be said to have inaugurated?

HYMN. 78.

To the name of God on high,
God of might and majesty,
God of heaven, and earth, and sea,
Blessing, praise and glory be.

To the name of Christ the Lord,
Son of God, incarnate Word,
Christ, by whom all things were made,
Be an endless honor paid.

To the Holy Spirit he
Equal praise eternally,
With the Father and the Son,
One in name, in glory one,

Glorious is our God the Lord,
Praises, then, with one accord,
To his holy name be given,
By the sons of earth and heaven.

3d Quarter.

AUGSBURG LESSON LEAF. July 28, 1878.

Lesson XXX.

International Bible Lessons.

LUKE iv. 16-30.

JESUS AT NAZARETH.

16. "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath-day, and stood up for to read.

17. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias: and when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

18. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

19. To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

20. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

21. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

22. And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?

23. And he said unto them, Ye will surely say

unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself; whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum do also here in thy country.

24. And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.

25. But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;

26. But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.

27. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.

28. And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

29. And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.

30. But he passing through the midst of them, went his way.

CENTRAL TEXT.—Verse 24. Commit to memory.

LESSON TAUGHT.—External relations to Jesus and the Gospel avail nothing without internal faith. Necessity of personal faith.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And they were astonished at his doctrine; for his word was with power."—Luke iv. 32.

SCRIPTURE READINGS.

M. Luke iv. 1-13.

T. John i. 19-52.

W. John. ii. 1-25.

Th. John iii. 1-36.

F. John iv. 1-42.

Sat. John iv. 43-54.

S. Luke iv. 14-30.

BRIEF NOTES.—This visit to Nazareth seems to have occurred toward the close of the first year of Jesus' public life. Matt. xiii. 54-58; Mark. vi. 1-6, likely refer to this same visit, though some think a second one is there described. Every considerable town had a Jews' meeting-house, called a *synagogue*. Prayer, reading of the Scriptures, and preaching, constituted the exercises. "Stood up" to read, "sat down" to

teach. Such were the customs. "Delivered unto him" by the ruler of the synagogue. "The book"—in the form of a parchment roll. "Esaias"—Greek form of *Isaiah*; so "Elias" for *Elijah*, and "Eliseus" for *Elisha*. "Fulfilled"—for it was a prophecy of the Christ. "Bare him witness"—it was customary to manifest assent or dissent, in some form, throughout the audience. "Gracious words"—words gracefully spoken; reference is to the manner rather than the matter of his discourse. In verses 25 and 27 the words "*in Israel*" and "*none of them*" are to be emphasized in order to bring out the sense of the passage. Neither of those benefited belonged to Israel. "Full of wrath" at such a warning and such presumption, as they considered it, in this young carpenter.

Explanatory Questions.

HIS PREACHING.

1. What did Jesus begin to do after his baptism? See John i. ii, iii., and Mark i. 14, 15.
2. To what place did he come? Was he known there? How so?
3. What is said of his habit? What did he do this time?
4. Give some account of a synagogue and its services?
5. What was handed to him? By whom? What kind of "books"?
6. What passage did he read? When was it written? To whom did it refer?
7. After reading, what did he do, and why? What is said of the congregation present?
8. What did Jesus then preach to them? What is implied in the expression "he began to say unto them"?

ITS EFFECT.

9. How were the congregation impressed? What is meant by "gracious words"?

10. What did they say? What feelings did this indicate? See Matt. xiii. 57.
11. Perceiving their feelings, what further did Jesus say to them? Verse 23. Explain.
12. What proverb did he quote to them? Why is this so?
13. What did he say of Elijah's time? Of Elisha's?
14. What did he mean to teach them by these illustrations?
15. What is the "Lesson Taught" us to-day?
16. Did Jesus' hearers understand him? How did they feel? Why?
17. What did they do? What did they propose to do?
18. Did they do it? Why not? Explain.
19. In all this what Scripture is illustrated John i. 1.
20. Has he come to you? Have you received him?

HYMN. 78.

Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high;
Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide;
Oh, receive my soul at last!

Other refuge have I none;
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee
Leave, oh, leave me not alone,
Still support and comfort me;
All my trust on Thee is stayed,
All my help from Thee I bring;
Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of Thy wing.

(Continued from page 218.)

WHEELING, W. VA.—*The Great Excursion.* The English Lutheran Sunday-school, accompanied by their many friends, under command of General Rev. S. B. Barnitz, left on the P., W. & K'y, this morning, for a day's pleasure in the woods. The weather is certainly all that could be asked, and we suppose that everybody in that large party had a good time, and do not regret having gone. When the train left the Eleventh Street depot nine cars were filled, and two more were filled at the Top Mill, making in all eleven cars, containing about 800 people. Under the efficient and careful management of Rev. S. B. Barnitz, the day will undoubtedly be free from accidents, and parents having children at the picnic may feel assured of their safety.—*Wheeling Evening Standard.*

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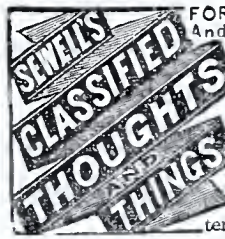
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